

Promotional Products Business

PPB



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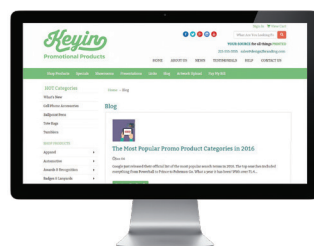
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MAY 2017

Promotional Products Business

The Official Business Monthly of Promotional Products Association International



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Nine heroes among us that make giving back a part of their company culture.

Members of the Ariel Premium team



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Springing Forth

2017 is flying by and it is already spring. Today, we are in full throttle, giving all PPAI members full access to numerous tools to Get In Touch!® including print ads, logos, social media graphics, research, videos and more all for you to spread this amazing message about the promotional products industry.

How Are You Getting In Touch?

As you know, the Get In Touch! initiative is an integral part of PPAI's new mission as we are making the change from transactional to relational. This campaign, the first of its kind, is aimed at increasing awareness and enhancing the overall perception of promotional products with the ultimate goal of *directing a larger share of advertising dollars to include the purchase of promotional products*. This is all focused on your success as promotional product professionals.

My promotional products company, Competitive Edge, is getting in touch through hosting our customers and prospective customers at regional association buyer shows that will allow them to have fun while learning about how we can help them by being an important part of their advertising and marketing dollars. We recently hosted several customers at the PPACHicago New Ideas Show at the Arlington Park Racetrack where they could enjoy a day at the track as they met with more than 100 of our finest suppliers. It was a fantastic event and our customers loved the hands-on experience.

We want to hear how all of you are getting in touch. Please share what you, your customers or others are doing to

It is truly amazing what we can all achieve when we do it together. We need your voice and action as a PPAI member.

Get In Touch!. Sharing how you are getting people involved—from your internal staff to your clients—will offer all of us the inspiration to be creative and innovative in our own efforts. To share what you are doing to Get In Touch!, please contact Kim R. Todora, PPAI public relations manager, at KimT@ppai.org.

L.E.A.D. Is One Of The Ways PPAI Is Getting In Touch

The promotional products industry is nearly a \$21 billion industry annually. We are a powerful industry and we need to be heard, seen and recognized. Legislative Education and Action Day (L.E.A.D.) is a way PPAI is getting in touch and staying in touch. For nearly a decade, PPAI has participated in L.E.A.D. Industry professionals throughout the country travel to Washington, D.C. to meet with senators, representatives and legislative staff to discuss and create awareness about issues, opportunities and potential challenges we face.

As this issue is going to press, 80 representatives are scheduled to take part in L.E.A.D. 2017 and over 250 meetings are scheduled on April 26 and 27. We are ready to discuss relevant issues affecting our industry. This forum allows us to take the industry's voice to Capitol Hill.

This is my third year participating in L.E.A.D. as a PPAI member, board member and as an owner of a promotional

products business. Each year, it has been very gratifying to know I was making a difference. To be among other PPAI members and get in front of legislators, and meet face-to-face with them to share the importance of our industry, was empowering. These discussions brought a new sense of awareness to the size and impact our industry has not only in our home state, but the domestic economy as a whole. This, indeed, is another way in which PPAI is getting in touch.

L.E.A.D. is also a powerful tool on the state level. I just returned from Michigan's L.E.A.D. Local in Lansing at the end of March where 10 MiPPA members hosted breakfast for 36 Michigan legislative representatives and visited an additional 60 offices to make them aware of the importance promotional products businesses play in Michigan's economy; nearly 8,000 Michigan residents work for 970 Michigan-based promotional products businesses. We had a fantastic turnout and were able to have some meaningful face-to-face meetings with our legislative representatives.

Thank You

It is truly amazing what we can all achieve when we do it together. We need your voice and action as a PPAI member. I know we are making a difference to grow and protect the promotional products industry. Thank you. **PPB**

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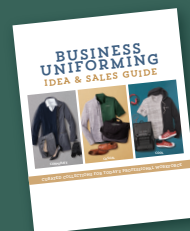
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Welcoming The Next Generation

As part of its participation in the American Marketing Association's 39th annual International Collegiate Conference, held this March in New Orleans, Louisiana, PPAI President and CEO Paul Bellantone, CAE, moderated a panel discussion on promotional products marketing. The panel took questions from students in the audience and spoke on the various business and career paths within the promotional products industry.

I attended this session at the AMA International Collegiate Conference and found it very beneficial. Often times, when students are considering where to take their marketing degree after college, they are under-informed about promotions. We were given a book [Kirby Hasseman's *Delivering Marketing Joy*] in the session that I have since read cover-to-cover. I will definitely be focusing my career on promotions upon graduating this May!

MORGAN TIGHE, Southern Illinois University-Carbondale



Breaking Out Of Your Niche

The April issue's Question column explored how distributors can get out of a tailspin when the niche they've specialized in is on a downward cycle.

On niche market specialization, there are several areas to investigate in addition to those mentioned [in the article]:

1 If your market niche has been one company in an industry and if it is a larger company, you might try getting internal referrals. In a course I taught, I asked the class if they controlled all of the purchases of promotional products in that company. Most of the group felt that they did get all of the business from that client.

I suggested that prior to the next class meeting each person do a little research with that client to see if other departments or other locations had requirements. The most vocal member of the group was convinced that he had all of the business but took up the challenge and returned to the next class with a surprising result. His contact said the company had a number of subsidiaries located two floors above his office and provided the name of a key contact. Our distributor class member

went upstairs to visit with several key people and within six months gained six new clients who, as a group, purchased three times as much as his old client had purchased in the prior year.

2 Most of my consulting clients over the past 25 years failed to exploit their neighborhood. Most towns and cities have a department in their government responsible for bringing new business to their locations. Most towns and cities list their major clients on their websites. Many distributors consider these lists as a good source of leads for new business.

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Start Smart

Due diligence makes all the difference when
deciding on wearable technology options.

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All About Internships



Q **A DISTRIBUTOR ASKS:** I'm thinking about adding a college intern this summer but I'm unsure of how to structure the setup. For those distributors or suppliers who have had interns, do you pay your interns or do you work with their school to provide credit? Do you have them sign a confidentiality agreement and/or non-compete agreement? What types of tasks do you have them do? Is there anything else I should consider to make sure it's a successful experience for both parties?

A Plan to pay them. Taking the credit-only route is a cheap way out and you may not land any good candidates. If the educational institution has a veterans program, the government will pay for the internship for the veterans in school. We strongly recommend engaging in any veterans programs at schools. We have interns interview as regular employees and sign regular employee paperwork, which includes all the confidentiality and non-compete forms. Our interns do regular

jobs within our company. We post job descriptions for the areas we wish to have interns work and we expect them to learn and to contribute. No grunt work. It is a big waste of time if you approach them as flunkies.

Go to the internship fairs and use them as a jobs fair. Know in advance that college students get zero exposure to our industry. Our products are ubiquitous to them but once they realize it is an industry, you would be amazed how interested they are in it. That was our biggest surprise—the

student response to our industry.

Internships, if approached seriously with the idea of the students contributing, can be very rewarding. Our foray last year into internship programs resulted in the direct hiring of five graduates—two bachelor's degree grads, one MBA and two MBAs; of those, two were veterans.

DAVID TATE

*President
Signet, Inc.
PPAI 101157*

Two New Initiatives Draw Students To The Industry

1. PPEF Pilot Program

Promotional Products Education Foundation (PPEF) is in its second year of a pilot program that sets up named scholarships at selected universities/colleges that will then be awarded by the schools to students studying in fields related to the promotional products industry. The program is a collaboration between PPEF and industry companies. In addition to providing the scholarships, the companies are expected to do outreach and provide internships through the school.

The pilot program started in 2016 with the Promotional Products Education Foundation – Signet Scholarship at the Fogelman College of Business and Economics at the University of Memphis in Memphis, Tennessee, and the Promotional Products Education Foundation – Brand Fuel Scholarship at Wake Tech Community College in Raleigh, North Carolina.

“PPEF is expanding the pilot program by up to an additional 10 companies,” says Sara Besly, PPEF Foundation manager. “The work group is tracking successes and failures, determining time and resources involved and developing templates and guidelines as we progress. PPEF is controlling the growth to determine if this is scalable to the whole industry. We have several companies interested in participating and I am currently researching schools in these companies’ business areas to see if the named scholarships start at the dollar commitment that we have set as the target amount (\$10,000 over four years).”

PPEF has set up one new program in 2017. The Promotional Products Education Foundation – BrandVia Scholarship will be awarded at San Jose State University in San Jose, California. “For the next four years, the \$2,500

scholarship will be awarded annually to a junior or senior majoring in marketing. The selection process will be coordinated by SJSU for students with a minimum GPA of 3.0 who have a financial need,” Besly says.

If your company is interested in participating in the PPEF Pilot Program, email Sara Besly at sarab@ppai.org.

2. PPAI Intern Program

Just in time for the summer internship season, PPAI is excited to announce its latest industry education program. The PPAI Intern Program gives companies the tools they need to effectively manage internship programs. Internships are a great way to introduce future generations to the power of the promotional products industry. PPAI makes it easier for your company to target, hire, train and learn from a college intern.

The PPAI Intern Program Includes:

- *Promotional Products 101*, a publication that brings interns up to speed on industry basics
- A lineup of targeted webinars focusing on the needs of interns to help them learn what they need to know to be successful
- Guidance from Seth Barnett, PPAI's diversity development and engagement manager
- Temporary access to a SAGE Total Access user license giving interns full access to the industry's sourcing and business management tools
- A chance to win free admission to SPARK, the PPAI conference for young industry professionals, which will be held in Denver, July 27-28, 2017
- Personalized collateral for participating employers

- Comprehensive Internship FAQs for prospective employers
- A chance for each participant in the PPAI Intern Program to win a \$1,000 scholarship. One winner will be randomly chosen from candidates who successfully complete all requirements of the PPAI Intern Program. The winner will be announced by August 31, 2017.

For more information on PPAI's Industry Intern program, visit www.ppai.org/advocacy/diversity-engagement/ppai-intern-program or email internprogram@ppai.org.

Why Should You Hire An Intern?

There are numerous long-term benefits from initiating an internship program.

- High potential to convert interns into full-time employees
- Allows you to test-drive interns by evaluating how well they fit into your company culture
- Provides you with valuable feedback about your business operations
- Helps you prepare to hire more Millennials in the future
- Allows you to tackle projects that regular employees wouldn't be able to complete, maximizing productivity for the entire company
- Increases your company's visibility via word of mouth or testimonials

Source: PPAI Comprehensive Internship FAQs for prospective employers

We have had interns on several occasions, and currently have one working while she attends a local college. We do pay them. Normally we have them work about 16-20 hours a week, and we are very flexible with these hours.

My current intern works in our marketing department, creating marketing videos and also doing a lot of photography for a new website we are building. Sometimes these interns work into a full-time position, and sometimes they decide this industry is not a good fit.

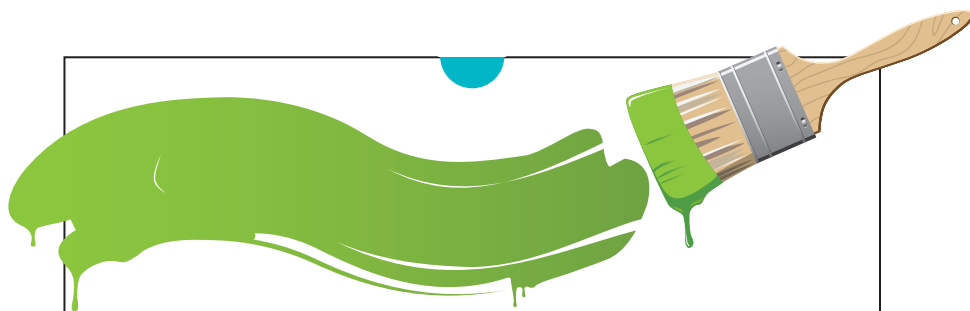
I do not have them sign a non-compete agreement. My experience has been very positive with interns; our team usually learns a tremendous amount from these bright, young minds, and of course we welcome the extra help.

CRAIG DICKENS

VP/Sales Manager

Suntex Industries

PPAI 113094



Do You Have An Answer?

A Distributor Asks: I'm increasingly asked by clients to develop a piece of art from scratch for a product. It's very difficult to allocate my time to do that, plus make sure everything's proofed, etc. And then the client doesn't want to pay for the time it took to design their art. How do other distributors handle this part of their business?

What's Your Answer? Email answers along with your name, title and company name by **May 19** to Question@ppai.org for possible inclusion in an upcoming issue of *PPB* magazine.

Julie Richie is a former associate editor for PPB.



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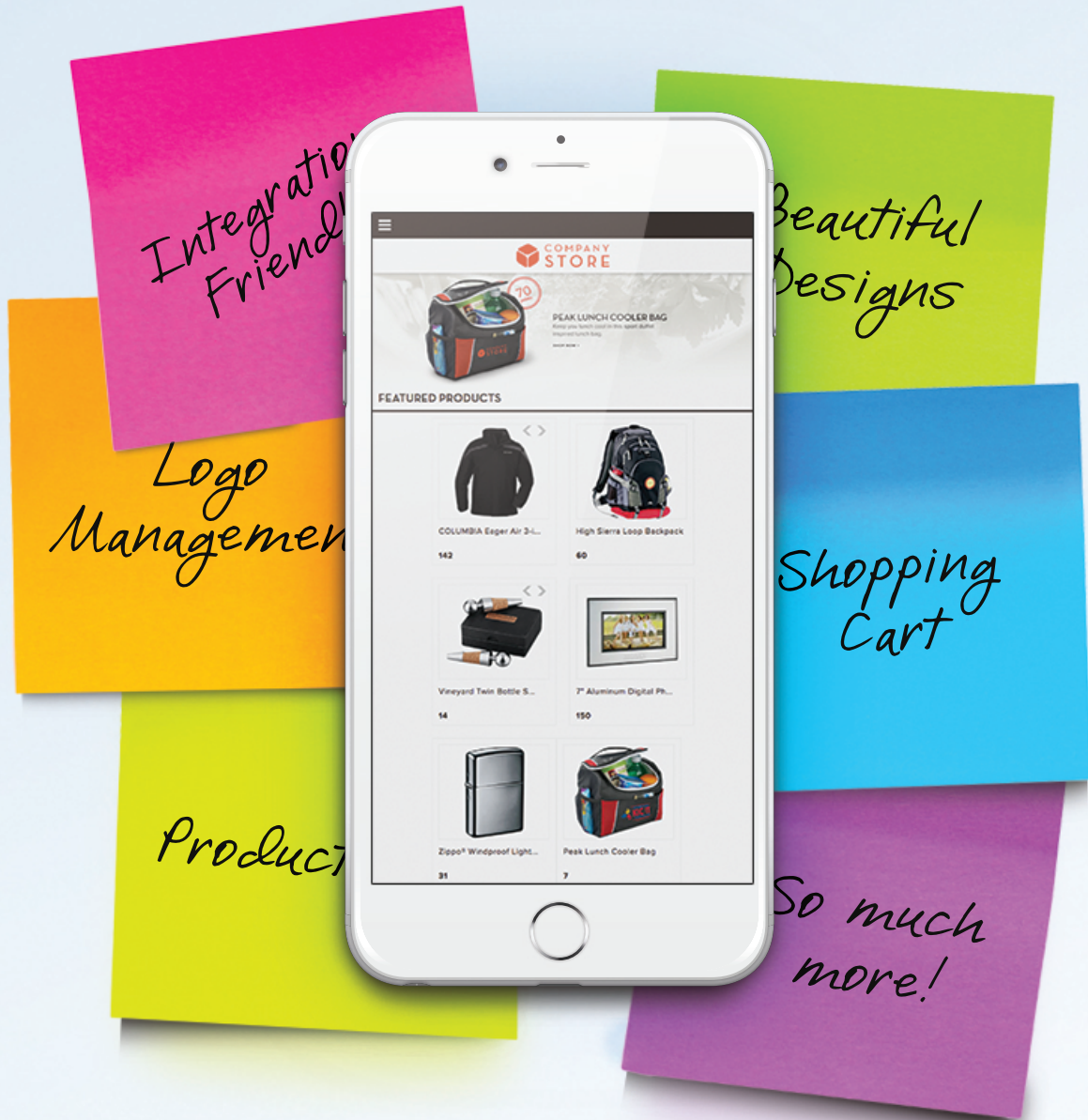
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Start Smart

Due diligence makes all the difference when deciding on wearable technology options.

Wearable technology, such as fitness trackers and smartwatches, has been around for long enough now that distributors have many options and price levels to choose from. But how can distributors make sure they are providing their clients with a quality product that will be a valued addition to end users' lives rather than discarded in a drawer?



Vito Ciaravino, owner of supplier Intelligent Galaxy, LLC (PPAI 516765), a company with the tagline The Leaders In Wearable Technology, says distributors should know there are some wearable technology items out there that don't work the way they advertise.

"Distributors need to understand the products and how they work, and not decide on a wearable strictly on price alone," says Ciaravino. "Do your research to learn what makes certain products

better. For example, find out what sensors a tracker uses. If it's a 2D sensor, it tracks *any* motion so it won't be very accurate. Better products include a 3D sensor, which means that three-dimensional movement is required for it to track, so something like waving your hand or driving won't register as movement and count as a step. Top-of-the-line products have 6D sensors, which can decipher whether you're going up or down stairs or biking."

Ciaravino also says distributors should check the app that comes with the device for ease of use, quality of data, and to make sure the tracker can connect properly before recommending it to their clients. For example, "Many apps give users an average calorie burn rate based on a person of similar height and weight, but some apps will allow end users to input their stride length, which gives a much more accurate calorie count," he explains.

Health And Fitness Focused Products

Music and GPS go straight to your wrist with the new **Misfit Vapor Smartwatch**—with no phone required. Built-in location services track your runs, swims (it's water resistant to 50 meters) and other activities in real time. View and track your heart rate. Utilize the Bluetooth connectivity to keep you connected and enjoy a virtual bezel which allows for quick navigation. It's all tucked behind a sleek and vibrant circular touchscreen that is as stylish as it is smart. The Misfit Vapor releases in July.

Fossil / PPAI 196495 / www.fossil.com



Case Study

Setting The Pace

Axis Promotions' (PPAI 159158) client wanted to celebrate a milestone achievement—being named the No. 1 U.S. Fairness Opinion Provider. "We sourced Fitbit and branded each one," says Johanna Gottlieb, senior branding specialist. "We sent them to a fulfillment house and we sourced mailers and added red crinkle (red is a big brand color for the client). Each Fitbit was put into the mailer with crinkle and sent with a personalized card. We also added a nice bellyband to the mailer and drop shipped these around the country."



With built-in Bluetooth wireless stereo headphones and a microphone for listening to music and hands-free phone calls, this **acrylic knit smart beanie** with ABS plastic buttons and components and rechargeable battery (included) features an easy-to-use interface and LED indicator lights. Expect about six to eight hours of playback time. The beanie works with most Bluetooth/wireless-enabled devices.

Prime Line / PPAI 112744

www.primeline.com



EYE ON APPAREL

wearable technology



This **activity tracker with heart rate monitor** is designed to be worn all day and lets you monitor and log your everyday routines, from eating and sleeping habits to calories burned. Review your running stats and incoming calls at a glance without ever breaking stride. This tracker also comes with anti-loss functionality, and a press of a button on the side of the watch will snap a picture on your phone. There are two available places for imprinting a logo, the band itself or on the outside of the box. The tracker is available exclusively in black.

[KTI Networks / KTI Promo](#) / PPAI 238818 / [www.ktipromo.com](#)



If you need a high-end fitness gift for serious runners, these **smart sunglasses** fit the bill. Combining Oakley's performance innovation heritage with Intel's technology expertise, these sunglasses feature a real-time voice-activated coaching system that creates a unique training program, tracks performance such as power output, heart rate, speed, cadence, distance and time, and coaches the wearer in the moment.

A touchpad on the temples controls functions with simple taps and swipes—adjust the volume, control music and calls from a paired phone.

[Abt Electronics](#) / PPAI 652151 / [www.abt.com](#)



The **ChillBand Ultra** goes beyond typical tracking (steps, calories burned, distance walked, etc.) to include dynamic heart rate, blood pressure monitoring and blood oxygen level reporting, great features for those people who need to track those levels regularly. It also includes an incoming call and text notification, an easy-to-use app, a touch screen and an anti-lost feature. It's available in four colors.

[Intelligent Galaxy, LLC](#)
PPAI 516765
[www.intelligentgalaxy.com](#)



The **Tap 'N Read Fitness Pedometer Watch** with a comfortable silicone rubber wristband automatically tracks steps, distance, calories burned and active time. Tap the display one time to change the function mode. No app, smartphone or software is required. A free spare pair of button cell batteries is included. It's available in four colors.

[Ariel Premium Supply, Inc.](#)
PPAI 161650
[www.arielpremium.com](#)

The high-visibility **waist pack** with an LED light is a great item for night running/walking or cycling. The LED light is visible from 1,000 feet and has three different light modes: fast or slow blink, or steady on. The strong, adjustable belt stays in place for bounce-free stability and comfort and extends from 27 to 37 inches. The large pocket holds valuables and is water-resistant. A non-replaceable lithium-ion battery comes in the pack, along with a USB charging cable for the rechargeable light. The item is CE- and Rohs-certified. It comes in neon safety green with a full-color heat transfer imprint.

[Beacon Promotions](#) / PPAI 113702 / [www.beaconpromotions.com](#)

Case Study



Message In A Backpack

When Corporate Specialty Insignia (PPAI 671332) was asked to suggest staff gifts as a recognition solution for a client focused on technology, it wanted to wow the client with something unique. “We selected the Therm-O Backpack™ from BAG MAKERS because it offered utility, integrated technology and had a high-perceived value for a diverse organization of gender and age,” says Bryan James, co-owner of Corporate Specialty Insignia. “We embedded a digital code in the logo which is stored in the Cloud and is linked to a URL, YouTube or coupon, and can be redirected at a moment’s notice using the Digimarc® Discover app and VistaScan technology.” [VistaScan combines BAG MAKERS’ ColorVista imprint process with digital barcode technology to create an interactive experience]. “We encouraged the end buyer to record a warm, strategic message and then upload it to YouTube. Each end user received the backpack and was given instructions to download the free app and scan the logo to view the video message. Lastly, the Digimarc technology offers analytics so we provided the amount of views (scans) by end users, which exceeded 60 percent.”

Ten New And Upcoming Wearable Tech Trends To Watch

- 1 **Smart jewelry** — gems that offer UV detection so you know when to cover up, and bracelets that pay your bills
- 2 **Connected clothes** — fabric integrated with technology
- 3 **Smart shoes** — sneakers with integrated trackers
- 4 **More measuring** — wearables that measure VO2 Max, heart rate variability (HRV), metabolic rates, body composition and sweat
- 5 **Chore gamification** — smart wearables for kids age three to eight that parents can communicate with through an app to set schedules, teach time and, yes, reward chore completion
- 6 **Emotional intelligence** — wearables that sense how you feel, rather than just how fit you are
- 7 **ID wristbands** — paper bracelets for virtual queueing, NFC payments, photo tagging and easy access to doors, turnstiles and lockers
- 8 **Tech tats** — temporary tattoos or “biowearables” that can send health data such as blood sugar levels to doctors, among many other potential uses
- 9 **Body heat** — wearable devices powered by the body
- 10 **Hearables** — high-powered earbuds for fitness tracking, coaching and real-time translation, as well as to connect with AI assistants such as Siri, Alexa, Cortana and Google Assistant

Sources: Wareable.com; Intelligent Galaxy LLC



Cases To Carry Your Technology



This 4.75-inch by six-inch high-quality **Neoprene smartphone holder** with adjustable elastic armband fits most popular touchscreen smartphones. It includes a one-color imprint on one side; additional imprint colors or locations are available. The holder comes in more than 50 color options.

Numo / PPAI 112597 / www.numomfg.com



This **tech-friendly backpack** includes a padded rear compartment that holds up to a 17-inch laptop. It also has a compartment for a 10-inch iPad, tablet or eReader. A padded back panel and adjustable shoulder straps bring added comfort and water-resistant zippers on exterior pockets offer excellent protection for belongings. The earth-friendly Nüwa exterior fabric has 100-percent genuine Napa leather accents. If you happen to lose your backpack, the Swiss Tracker™ Bag Tracking Program helps reunite you with your bag anywhere in the world for free.

Victorinox Swiss Army, Inc.

PPAI 113873 / www.VSACorporate.com



This 8.75-inch by 10.25-inch **leather portfolio** is designed with flexible elastic tabs to fit any tablet. It includes a writing pad and Scully pen, and it has a magnetic snap closure. The tablet cover is available in soft plonge leather in chocolate and black.

Scully Leather / PPAI 174962 / www.scullycorporate.com



The **Professional Rolling Laptop Case** offers four separate storage sections, is constructed from durable ballistic nylon and includes a five-stage telescoping handle, padded top carry handle, free-rolling in-line skate wheels and a trolley strap for stacking on other luggage. The case also features a fully adjustable and padded laptop compartment for 13-inch to 17-inch laptops, a separate fleece-lined pouch for a tablet, a large file section and an oversized compartment for clothing and personal items. The matching **Professional Checkpoint-friendly Backpack** fits securely on top of the rolling case with its built-in trolley strap. The backpack also features a fully adjustable and padded laptop compartment for 13- to 16-inch laptops, and a separate fleece-lined pouch for a tablet. Both cases come with a lifetime warranty.

Mobile Edge / PPAI 314937

www.mobileedge.com

Julie Richie is a former associate editor for PPB.

Greater China vs. Alibaba

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- ☒ Live Customer Care
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- ☒ Understand US Culture & Needs of Clients
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- ☒ Fulfillment and Distribution
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Alibaba

- ☒ Competitive Pricing
- ☐ Live Customer Care
- ☐ C-TPAT Certified
- ☐ Accurate Quotes Within 24 Hours
- ☐ Complete Project Management
- ☐ 30-Day Product Guarantee
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Apparel Decorating Guidelines

Eleven Of
The Most
Frequently
Asked
Questions
About
Decorating
Apparel

by Andy Shuman

Decorated apparel continues to hold a strong categorical lead among all promotional marketing products. (In PPAI's most recent industry study, apparel comprised 32 percent of all promotional products sold through distributors.) With its phenomenal value per exposure, longevity among end users and strong profit margins, promotional apparel is the go-to product for many programs, events, corporate outings and incentive programs.

Why, then, are so many distributors quick to shy away from such a successful product category? The short answer is that selling decorated apparel can be confusing, intimidating, time-consuming and, without the proper background knowledge, a real headache.

Developing a blanket list of answers on the hows, whys and what ifs of decorated apparel

sales to suit the comprehensive needs of all distributors is impossible, because there are so many variables from sale to sale. However, knowing a few basic answers to some of the most commonly asked questions and challenges will take you a long way in your quest for successful apparel sales and growth within this huge market segment.

While distributor sales professionals will run into unique situations and challenges, the following questions and answers should provide a guideline that will make the sales process go more smoothly.

1 What types of garment decoration should I be offering my clients? While embroidery and screen printing remain the most popular decorating options for apparel by far, sublimation, direct-to-garment printing, heat

transfers and mixed media (using a combination of any of these methods) are becoming extremely popular.

2 What is the difference between screen printing, sublimation and transfers?

Screen printing uses Plastisol or water-based inks that are pressed through various mesh gauge screens to create a single color or multi-color decoration. Sublimation, on the other hand, is a chemical reaction that turns an image, printed on special sublimation paper called a transfer sheet, into a gas that is transferred into the fibers of a garment using heat and pressure. It only works on white or light-colored polyester garments. Heat transfers, also called digital transfers, are achieved by transferring digital or ink-based images to garments using heat and pressure.

3 How are embroidery and screen printing most commonly priced? Typically, both processes are quantity sensitive, meaning the more garments you are decorating, the lower the cost per piece. In addition, embroidery is typically priced by the number of stitches needed to create the logo or message, while screen printing is generally priced by the number of colors used. The cost per piece increases as the number of stitches or colors in a logo increase. For small quantities of three- or four-color designs, screen printing is not as cost effective as some of the other processes.

it is more a matter of personal preference. Purchasing finished/ decorated garments from an apparel wholesaler can provide ease of process, lower shipping costs and eliminate the risk of damaged products that result in short shipments. However, many distributors believe strongly in the partnerships forged with contract decorators who can provide consistent quality, price and turn time across all product brands.

6 Why is screen printing more expensive on dark garments? Printing on dark garments requires a base coat. For example, if you want to paint a light color on a dark wall in your home, you will most likely need to apply a primer coat so that your new color is more vibrant. The screen printing process follows the same general idea.

7 What is the most cost-effective way to print a full-color imprint on dark garments at low quantities? The request for low-quantity orders with complex art is unquestionably on the rise. Fortunately, there are several decorating processes that make fulfilling these requests possible. The two most common “go-to” options are direct-to-garment digital printing and digital transfers. Direct-to-garment printing is a process where an image or logo is printed directly on the garment, similar to how a piece of paper is fed through an inkjet printer. Digital transfers, also called heat transfers, are printed on special paper that is then pressed onto the garment using heat and pressure. Both can be done in low minimums with little to no set-up charge.

8 What is the best form of decoration for lightweight polyester performance polos given their increased popularity and market presence? Lightweight performance fabrics are increasingly changing the face of decorating. A few years ago, it would have been very uncommon to use screen printing or heat transfers on a high-end polo. Embroidery was the most common form of decoration with the greatest perceived value. Brands such as Under Armour have changed this mentality. Performance fabrics, including outerwear, are now quite commonly decorated using screen printing and heat transfers. While embroidery is still more common on these types of garments, a print or transfer can create a clean, vibrant look that will not result in puckering issues that are, to a degree, unavoidable when using embroidery.

9 What decoration methods work best for different types of fabrics? When evaluating the appropriate use of different garment decorations for various fabrics, distributors should take several things into consideration to determine the best method. First and foremost, consider the logo itself. Does it have a great amount of small detail? How many colors does it contain? The next evaluation should be of the garment itself. What type of garment is it? What is the fabric? Is the fabric textured? What is the weight of the fabric? Finally, consider the order quantity. Once these answers have been determined, the best decoration method can be matched to the garment. For



With its phenomenal value per exposure, longevity among end users and strong profit margins, promotional apparel is the go-to product for many programs, events, corporate outings and incentive programs.

4 What type of art should a distributor provide for each decorating process? As a rule, high-quality art will result in a higher-quality finished product. This is especially true in screen printing. A distributor will want to provide a vector file for embroidery and cut-vinyl decorating. For screen printing, either a vector file or a raster file will work. Vector artwork is created using a series of points or nodes and outlines or paths, to create shapes that can then be filled or outlined with color. It can be enlarged without affecting the sharpness of the image. Raster artwork is tonal artwork created by a series of small dots or pixels. Because it loses sharpness when enlarged, it's important to know the largest size needed to produce a product before creating the file.

5 Will a distributor find more success by using a contract decorator or a garment wholesaler who offers decoration? There is no clear-cut answer to this question as

DECORATING



Digital Heat Transfer



Direct-To-Garment



Muted Silkscreen



Imprint locations have become much less “traditional” over the past several years. Nape of neck, sleeves, cuffs, collars, and the lower front of the garment above the finished hem have all become far more common as the promotional market mirrors apparel looks seen in the retail sector.

example, if the garment is a lightweight golf shirt, and the logo is quite detailed and includes small text, consider a digital transfer in lieu of embroidery. If the logo includes several colors and the quantity of the order is relatively small on tee shirts or sweatshirts, for example, direct-to-garment printing is a good choice over traditional screen printing. If a distributor is selling a polyester performance garment, and the client is looking for a large, colorful design with unique or “all-over” print locations, sublimation is a great option. Distributors should lean on their relationships with their suppliers and decorators for guidance on the best decoration method for the garment and fabric selected. These production partners have likely worked on many similar projects and can provide reference points and examples that will result in the best possible options for the project at hand.

10 What are the challenges in printing or embroidering on garment collars and sleeves? Imprint locations have become much less “traditional” over

the past several years. Nape of neck, sleeves, cuffs, collars, and the lower front of the garment above the finished hem have all become far more common as the promotional market mirrors apparel looks seen in the retail sector. When attempting to decorate in these locations, it is important to evaluate the minimum size at which the decoration can be executed without compromising quality (some of these non-traditional decoration locations are small spaces). Additionally, distributors should consult with their decorator or garment supplier as to the accessibility of these locations. For example, garments with narrow, or form-fitted sleeves may not allow for enough access space to adequately embroider a lower sleeve location.

11 What should a distributor look for when sourcing a good, direct-to-garment supplier/decorator? The fundamental technology for direct-to-garment, or DTG, printing has come a long way over the past few years, and continues to improve at a rapid pace. When sourcing a decorator, distributors should

begin by familiarizing themselves with the equipment used and the output capacity of the decorator they are considering. The best way to further the relationship is to work carefully and closely with the decorator on several samples first. This will set a realistic level of standards as to what the distributor can expect from a quality and output standpoint.

In the grand scheme of apparel sales, the key is to stay abreast of new trends and decoration methods as they become available. Forging a solid working relationship with your garment supplier and/or decorator that’s grounded in trust and education will prove invaluable in helping distributors more knowledgeably advise their clients.

End buyers assume distributors are experts on the tens of thousands of promotional products they sell and the applicable decoration methods for each. Partnering with suppliers in each product segment, especially in the apparel category, will cover an immeasurable amount of ground in ensuring sales success. And who knows—it may be less intimidating than expected. **PPB**

Andy Shuman is general manager at supplier Rockland Embroidery, Inc. in Reading, Pennsylvania.

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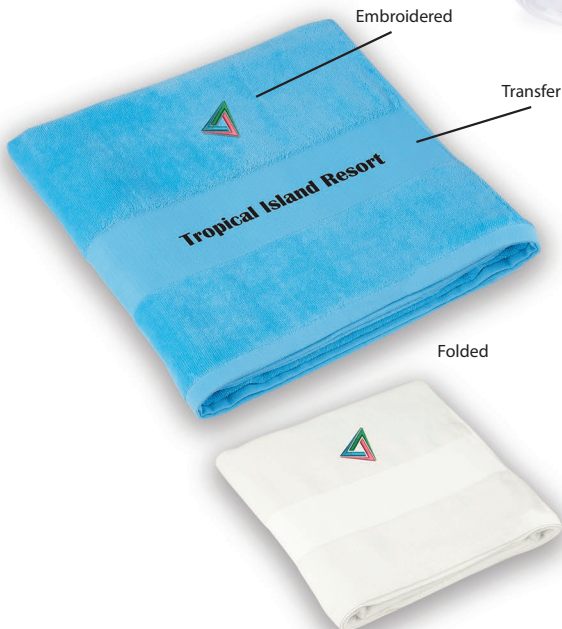


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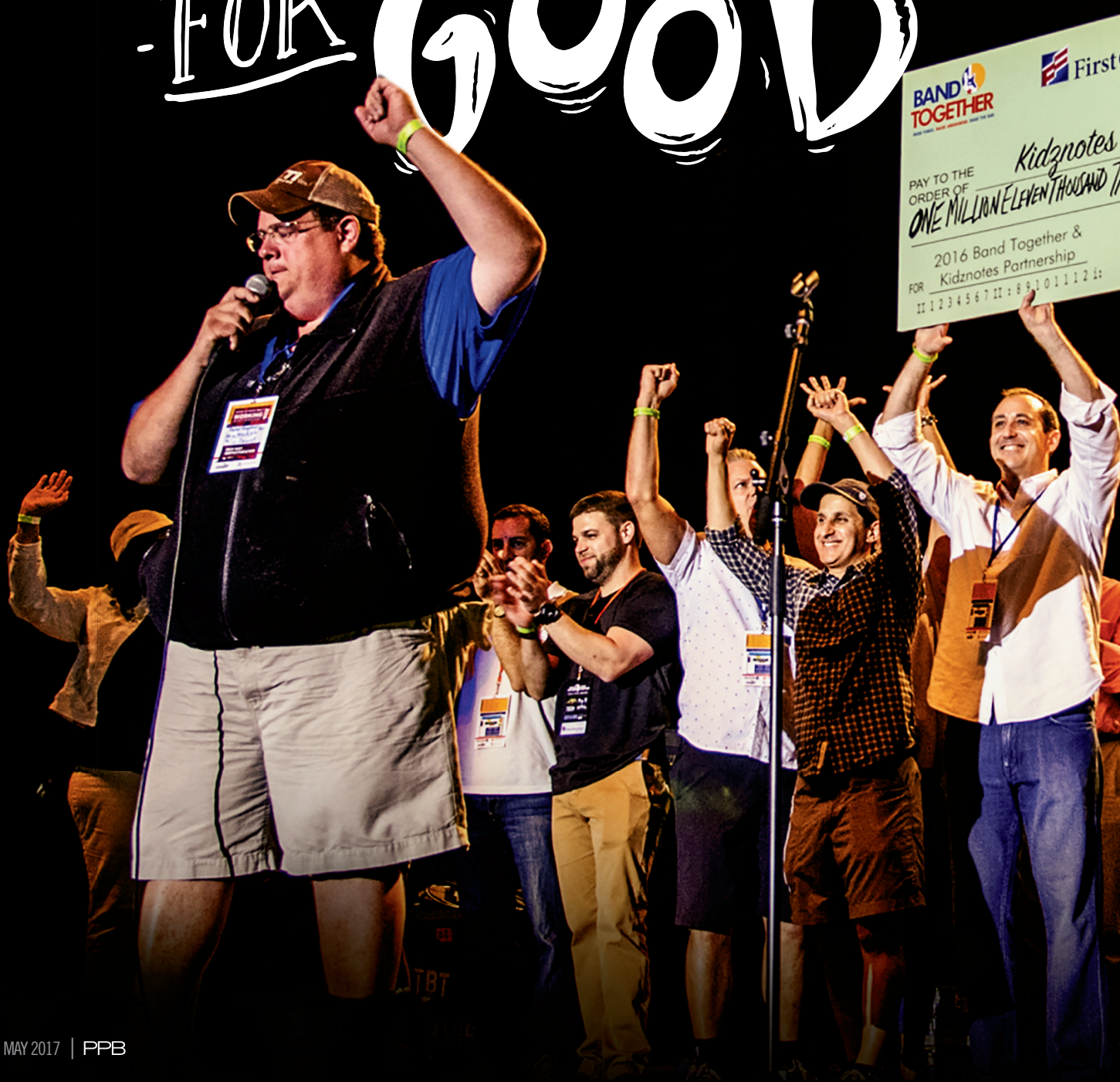
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FORCES FOR GOOD



Meet nine heroes among us that make giving back part of their corporate culture

by Julie Richie

It's no secret that we have big problems in every community and around the globe—from disease, poverty, environmental challenges, and educational and social justice issues, to disaster relief needs. The good news is that promotional products industry companies are in a great position to

do something about all of these problems—with beneficial business results. With a December 2015 study by Omnicom Group's Cone Communications finding that Gen Y will spend up to 70 percent more on brands that support causes, today's businesses can't afford *not* to get involved.

Afdhel Aziz, co-author of *Good Is The New Cool. Market*

Kidznotes was the recipient of more than \$1 million raised by Band Together NC in 2016.

Photo by Gabriel Nelson

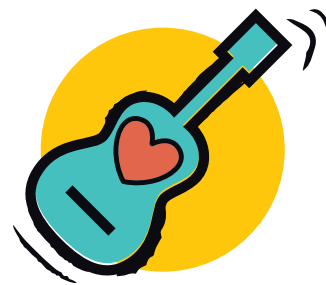
Like You Give A Damn, says there's been a massive awakening in social consciousness in the past couple years. In his 2017 SXSW session, Good Is The New Cool, he said, "...In a world that's obsessed with celebrity culture and shallowness, meaningfulness has now started to become really important. Purpose has started to become really important ...Brands are starting to think about their place in the world and how they can balance their need to make a profit but also do something positive for their community and...for the planet as well."

General Mills's new marketing effort for Cheerios is a perfect example of balancing profit and planet. This spring the company removed its iconic BuzzBee character from Honey Nut Cheerios boxes (a blank silhouette remains) to call attention to the worldwide disappearance of honeybees, which are important plant pollinators. With the social media campaign hashtag #BringBackTheBees, the company created a dedicated landing page on the Cheerios website for visitors to learn about the campaign and to order free wildflower seeds to plant in their own backyards to give bees access to wildflower nectar and pollen. By utilizing cross-marketing channels to increase engagement, the brand is getting the most out of its campaign—which the company hopes will increase sales *and* the honeybee population.

PPB spoke with a sampling of industry companies that are committed to charitable giving to learn more about their efforts—and to hear about the positive results they see both in the organizations they support and in their own businesses.

From their impassioned responses, it's clear that doing good really *is* the new cool. Read on for their inspiring stories and for simple tips on how your company can be a force for doing good.

BRAND FUEL



Supported charities: In the industry, distributor Brand Fuel supports both PromoKitchen and Promotional Products Education Foundation (PPEF), both dedicated to education. The company's commitment to PPEF has been bolstered through helping to create distributor group Reciprocity Road, which also gives back to PPEF. Outside the industry, Brand Fuel supports whatever cause its team gets most excited about, including Band Together NC, an annual music fundraising event that Danny Rosin, CAS, co-founded on September 11, 2001, which has been a mainstay in the company's giving program because of its unique model of supporting a different nonprofit annually. Ben Folds headlines this year's May 6 concert that has raised more than \$1 million for a new YMCA facility in Raleigh, North Carolina.

Program structure: Employees receive paid time off for volunteering in the community. They also receive a monthly stipend for wellness, which often includes supporting nonprofits, where the employees, not owners, decide what causes to support. Staffers who are involved or invested in company initiatives often receive added perks, like tickets to a concert. Brand Fuel offers free nonprofit marketing advice and has converted marketing dollars that once went to client end-user shows into support for local causes through volunteer activities with its clients. Of course, the company includes promotional giveaways to complement the sense of community giving.



Brand Fuel employees (L-R) Renee Holmes, Alex Stowe, Bridget Ray, John Griffin, Ryan Mensch, Brooks Walker, Jessie Bryan and co-owner Danny Rosin, CAS, supported the Inter-Faith Food Shuttle's Backpack Buddies Program at Trophy Brewing Co. in January by inviting clients to a BrandGood event that included handcrafted brew and a little hustle to fill backpacks with healthy weekend meals and snacks for children of food-insecure homes.



Volunteers at 2014's Band Together NC, included Brand Fuel employees and many more PPAI distributor and supplier members.

Photo by Rich Cox Photography

Q&A WITH



Danny Rosin, CAS, Co-Owner

What does giving back mean to Brand Fuel? At Brand Fuel, we believe we can improve the world through promotional products. Robert Fiveash, my business partner, and I call the business of benevolence "BrandGood." Beyond the positivity that gets connected to our brand, it gives us a shared sense of purpose. That purpose of giving back *outside* the office is directly tied to morale, culture, friendships,

retention, teamwork and generosity *in* the office. We want to be a force for good in the communities in which we work and play. The most important output? Helping others in need.

What advice do you have for other companies that want to start a charitable giving program? Let your staff and/or clients decide what is important to them and then join forces with them for good. Leverage our awesome promotional products medium at events as giveaways, for recognition, as donations, etc. Invite your clients to get involved. Distributors and suppliers should find ways to partner. Working together on community needs might be the most genuine relationship-building activity.

What has been the most unexpected result of your company's giving program? Witnessing the amazingly powerful discretionary effort from our staff. Through volunteerism, they make deeper connections and gain leadership and organizational skills they might not learn in their day jobs.

Top 10 Most Generous Fortune 500 Companies

**2015 total cash
contributions to charities*



\$446.7 million



\$301 million



\$281.3 million



\$276.4 million



\$268 million



\$225 million

JPMORGAN CHASE & CO.

\$224 million



\$168.5 million



\$167.8 million



\$142.9 million

Source: Fortune

NIMBLE IMPRESSIONS

Supported charities: Distributor Nimble Impressions supports many different charitable organizations, including the National Parkinson's Foundation and National Outdoor Leadership School. The company is also motivated by charitable opportunities that randomly come to its attention, such as its experience with an organization called With Purpose, whose mission is to conquer childhood cancer. The organization asked Nimble Impressions for some custom beer tap handles to use at an event where a percentage of beer sales went towards supporting their organization. Nimble Impressions decided to not only donate the tap handles and but also show its support by participating in the event. When there's an event tied to the giving where employees can all come together as a team and pitch in, more team members want to get involved.

Program structure: In 2016 the company established a philanthropic arm of Nimble Impressions to organize giving efforts named Nimble For Good. With a dedicated brand around this portion of the organization, the company hopes to elevate its charitable aspirations and find more efficient ways of spreading the word to get more people and businesses involved.



Nimble Impressions team members (back row from right) Katie Haskins, CFO; Alan Haskins, president and CEO; Missy Bachler, marketing manager; Heidi Fyten, customer support and Nanci Voyda, accounting, along with some friends and family members recently volunteered for an evening and packaged enough food to feed 57 children for an entire year at Feed My Starving Children, a nonprofit that provides nutritionally complete meals specifically formulated for malnourished children. Not pictured are Steve Schendel, sales executive, and Katie Simonette, account manager, who were also part of this project.

Q&A
WITH



Alan Haskins, President/CEO

What does giving back mean to Nimble Impressions? It means fulfillment, both personally and professionally. Very few promotional product companies have the opportunity to save lives by selling promo items. In the absence of that component to our business vertical, we feel that charitable giving is the best way to make an impact and hopefully improve lives. I live by the belief that "To whom much is given much is expected."

What advice do you have for other companies that want to start a charitable giving program? Parting with profits and time can obviously be a bit of a challenge when a business is just getting its footing. But, as time and resources free up, charitable giving becomes easier to achieve. A great philosophy that I like to live by is: learn it, earn it, return it. We never feel like we give back enough, but that just pushes us to constantly find ways to do better. If you want to start a charitable giving program, you just have to start somewhere. Everyone has charities that they have a personal connection with, so choosing who your beneficiaries are is the easy part. Then you have to establish a realistic and reasonable giving budget and find ways to get people excited about getting involved.

What has been the most unexpected result of your company's giving program? The amount of gratitude from the organizations that we've given to has been overwhelming. Seeing where the dollars and efforts go and the positive difference made in people's lives makes it all worthwhile.





The Rainforest Trust team sports their donated co-branded Ariel Premium/Rainforest Trust jackets.

ARIEL PREMIUM

Supported charities: Locally, supplier Ariel Premium supports several charities including holiday season toy drives for homeless children through the Sweet Celebrations Organization, and Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure events. On a national level, Ariel is involved with several charities supported by evangelical churches around the country. Globally, the company has recently become a corporate sponsor for Rainforest Trust, a nonprofit organization that helps buy and protect the world's tropical forests. In addition to financial support, the company provides other support such as providing gifts for their annual donor meeting, and promoting their work within the promotional products industry. Rainforest Trust is now at the forefront of many of the company's charitable causes. It's also one they can be involved with all year long. As part of Ariel's Rainforest Trust participation, the company's owners, Yuhling Lu and Tai Lin, are scheduled to be part of

an upcoming conservation tour to either Borneo, South Africa or Brazil to see where the corporate-giving dollars are best being utilized.

Program structure: Within the company, the HR department organizes most of the local charity involvement. Lu spearheads the company's involvement with Rainforest Trust. In addition to monetary support, the company also provides donor gifts and shares its experiences with others in the promotional industry. Team members get involved primarily through donations of time, money and gifts, volunteering or walking at Komen races, raising funds through sponsors, donating toys, organizing parties for homeless children, and other activities.



Q&A WITH



**Christopher Duffy, MAS,
Director of Marketing**

What does giving back mean to Ariel Premium?

Getting involved in charitable giving has become an excellent team-building and sharing experience for our associates. It brings our people together with a common goal and to share common experiences and interests. Our programs also provide that extra non-work environment bonding experience for them, getting to know their colleagues in a more social setting.

What advice do you have for other companies that want to start a charitable giving program?

We would highly recommend "adopting" a charitable cause for any company in our industry. Simply pick a cause that's most interesting to your team (let them select the organization), and watch how they'll run with it. The feel-good experience pays itself forward in so many ways—through improved camaraderie, attitude and empathy. So many charities are grateful for any support and so you can often choose the level of commitment your team is most comfortable with.

What has been the most unexpected result of your company's giving program? Our most unexpected outcome has been the higher level of participation that our team has been willing to commit to. When it's a good cause, it's simply amazing how much people will step up and get involved.

CHARLES RIVER APPAREL

Supported charities: The supplier has partnered with many charities over the years. Some of its long-standing relationships include Christmas in the City, Wellness Warriors, Circle of Hope, Catie's Closet and Charles River Watershed Association. This year the company has further expanded its philanthropic initiatives with the launch of a new program, Colors for a Cause. This new program leverages the company's No. 1 selling style, the New Englander®, to help create awareness and raise funds for national and local charities.

Program structure: Charles River Apparel's mission is to create a community and environment that is passionate about giving back. For the family-owned company, this message starts with owners Deb and Barry Lipsett. The company's giving program touches the lives of every employee at Charles River Apparel through volunteer opportunities for employees and their families, toy, food and clothing drives, monetary donations and in-kind donations. But the company also understands that employees may want to give back to other organizations outside of the established partnerships. In 2016, the Employee Volunteer program was created to give employees the opportunity to take a day off work to give back to their charity of choice. Employees are also encouraged to donate a Charles River Family 4 Pack (four Charles River Apparel New Englander® pieces) to a charity of their choosing as an auction or raffle item to raise funds for an organization in need.



Charles River employees from its distribution warehouse, IT, HR, production and marketing departments, as well as owner Deb Lipsett (third from left), spent a rewarding day last August at a "Fill The Bus" event through Catie's Closet. The employees sorted and bagged donated apparel to be distributed to discreet "closets" at schools where students in need can gather toiletries and a change of clothing they might otherwise not be able to afford.

Q&A
WITH



Deb Lipsett, Co-Owner
(pictured with her husband
and co-owner, Barry)

What does giving back mean to Charles River? While there are many causes and charities we support, Christmas in the City is an organization that is extremely near and dear to our hearts. This charity stands out because it is a 100-percent volunteer organization that gives homeless children and their families a holiday event that is truly spectacular. Christmas in the City gives the employees a sense of value and allows them to get involved in a variety of ways—from participating in our toy drive, to giving their time over a two-day period in December. In fact, more than 50 percent of our employees are involved during one of our busiest seasons of the year. In addition to contributing \$10,000, Charles River Apparel donates 3,000 jackets for homeless families and creates a decorated piece of apparel to incentivize donors who give more than \$500.

What advice do you have for other companies that want to start a charitable giving program? Be open to the idea. It is not about the award or recognition that may come with the opportunity to give. A charitable giving program is about the joy of giving back. It is about the sense of pride employees feel with being associated with a company that looks beyond itself. Find something that you and your team feels strongly about. Having flexibility

and variety is key to getting all your employees involved. Charitable giving works best when everyone, from top to bottom, is passionate about the program. Charitable giving doesn't start and stop with monetary donations. From in-kind donations to flexible volunteer time-off policies, it's about engagement, being truly present, participating and getting involved.

What has been the most unexpected result of your company's giving program? The level of engagement and generosity from more than 50 percent of our employees was unexpected but appreciated beyond words. There's a sense of pride and joy when your team embraces these opportunities, and seeing everyone come together is so rewarding. While employee engagement is important, the most unexpected outcome is that so many of our own customers are embracing the idea of giving back and have asked to partner with us to support the many charities we've partnered with over the years. Extending our reach and creating a momentum around "giving back" through our partnerships is unexpected and truly appreciated. As an owner, an employee and a volunteer there truly is no better feeling than giving back to help those in need. The genuine goodness that your heart feels during and especially after is overwhelming. It's not about what you do, what you make or even what you sell. It is truly about human kindness and giving back.



PPAI Celebrates 2016 Giving Achievements

PPAI takes its responsibility as a force for good seriously and supports organization-wide giving programs through its staff-led Community Services Committee. The staff's fundraising and volunteer events throughout the year benefit both the local Irving, Texas, community as well as national organizations. Here's a snapshot of just some of the organizations PPAI staff helped in 2016:

- **Irving Cares** – Employees collected 10,680 pounds of food and \$1,110 in cash during the annual four-week food drive in April and October/November, bringing PPAI's total food donation to more than 42,748 pounds of food since the program began in 2003. Additionally, 20 staff members volunteered time at the food pantry, offloading pallets, stocking shelves and bagging groceries for Irving Cares clients. During the year, employees donated travel-size toiletries and recycled grocery bags, and a truckload of reusable canvas bags from the SAGE show, as well.
- **Irving Humane Society** – Employees formed teams of two and participated in a lunchtime obstacle course on the PPAI lawn, raising \$1,213 to assist the animal shelter. A bake sale raised additional funds and staff members donated food, towels, toys and food. Three staff members donated their time to pick up and deliver goods.
- **Scottish Rite Hospital for Children** – Employees made 200 colorful paracord bracelets to donate to patients.
- **Operation Kindness** – Eight staff members each spent four hours volunteering at the shelter.
- **Promotional Products Education Foundation (PPEF)** – A lunchtime employee bingo game raised \$428 for the PPEF scholarship fund.

ePROMOS

Supported charities: Distributor ePromos randomly picks charities that apply to its program, ePromos for Good, which the company created in 2013 as a way to help worthy organizations promote their causes. Past recipients have included Advocates For World Health, Tennessee 4-H, The Scripps Research Institute, Megan Meier Foundation, Icing Smiles, Handsome Dan's Rescue and many others.

Program structure: Marketing associates handle ePromos for Good. Any 501(c)(3) organization, accredited school or religious organization may apply. Winners get a free consultation with one of ePromos' senior brand consultants who works with them to select from any of the company's 15,000-plus items. Every month, ePromos gives away \$500 in free promotional products to an organization in need. The company strives to make a difference by sharing promotional products with organizations that are helping to create a better world. Selected organizations may use the promotional items as they see fit—whether it's thanking volunteers, recruiting donors, or spreading the word about the organization. If chosen, organizations also get free exposure on ePromos' social media sites and in its Education Center.



ePromos employees Anna Gould, Pete Weismann, Cassandra Edelbrock and April Marx served lunch to 145 people at the Salvation Army in St. Cloud, Minnesota, and posted this photo on social media with the message, "We had a blast volunteering today, so thanks for the opportunity!"



Jason Robbins, CEO

What does giving back mean to ePromos?

There are lots of people in need. For those doing good, we want to do good, too. We believe that promotional products are much more than items imprinted with a logo—they have the power to drive action, inspire change and make a lasting impact. We love giving back; there are so many good causes and their biggest challenge is being heard and raising money for the cause. When we give promo items, we are directly saving them money. We have deep knowledge in how promotional items can be used in the non-profit world and we love helping the winners select great products to promote their causes. Our employees are proud of our program and they also participate in various events we have each quarter where we volunteer time. Those events are great team-building experiences as well and help us all stay grounded and grateful.

What advice do you have for other companies who want to start a charitable giving program?

Do it. It's great for the soul and great for business culture as well.

What has been the most unexpected result of your company's giving program? I think our employees like that we are making time for them to give back and it humanizes work and makes our staff feel good about themselves.



PROMO DIRECT

Supported charities: Distributor Promo Direct supports Focal Point Ministries, which uses radio broadcasts, podcasts and printed materials to spread the gospel of Christ; Sunshine Kids, a charity that supports kids with cancer; Nevada Partnership for Homeless Youth, a local charity; St. Jude's Children's Hospitals; and 3 Square, an organization that provides breakfast and lunches for impoverished school-age children and food for needy families.

Program structure: The company gives to different charities in different ways. For Focal Point, they give time volunteering and donate to their events, such as golf accessories for their annual golf tournament. With Sunshine Kids, the company supports them financially and sponsors their events with bags and t-shirts. Nevada Partnership for Homeless Youth has Promo Direct employees bowling in their fundraiser and donating the awards and t-shirts for the event. 3 Square provides opportunities for employees to volunteer at their facilities, to stuff backpacks for kids or pack boxes of food for the needy. With St. Jude's, Promo Direct works with their staff to supply promotional products for their fundraisers. In addition to providing financial resources and giving of employee time to these charities, the company also donates overruns and product returns.



Promo Direct employees participate in a bowling fundraiser to benefit Nevada Partnership for Homeless Youth, an organization that provides comprehensive life-saving services for homeless youth 24 hours a day on virtually every street corner in southern Nevada.

Q&A WITH



Dave Sarro, President/CEO

What does giving back mean to Promo Direct? We are always blessed when we bless those less fortunate. Whether we give a financial donation or a couple of hours of our time, we come away with a different perspective on life. We are more thankful for what we have and appreciate our own blessings. It is not difficult to find volunteers to help out at 3 Square for a couple of hours on a Saturday or to participate in a bowling tournament benefitting homeless youth. We have also participated in food drives at holiday times.

What advice do you have for other companies that want to start a charitable giving program? Giving back should come from the top down. With the support and leadership of management, it should be relatively easy to find a charitable cause or program to support in your local community. Whether it is a financial donation or a Saturday spent volunteering as a team, it is a worthwhile endeavor for the entire company to participate in.

What has been the most unexpected result of your company's giving program? There is such a sense of pride and accomplishment when one is giving back. Volunteering as a company to those less fortunate not only helps those in need but also builds up our own team, as we work together to provide for the needs of others.

SANMAR

Supported charities: Supplier SanMar focuses on supporting charities in the communities where its employees live and work while addressing known issues and challenges. Last year the company's home office and eight distribution centers worked with charitable organizations to help end homelessness. In the past, they've partnered with organizations that provide family services and help combat hunger. SanMar maintains long-standing relationships with some charities but is always on the lookout for other deserving organizations in its local communities.

Program structure: The company makes a point to communicate to all employees in all of its locations about needs in each of its local communities. Then they develop cross-functional committees to solidify plans and then broadly communicate fundraising goals. SanMar takes pride in making it really easy and fun for its employees to give. Fundraising events that employees participate in include chili cook-offs, online auctions, "dress your leader as a superhero" and even tossing rolls of toilet paper from the fifth-floor balcony. The company finds that a little friendly competition among groups and teams at the office helps inspire employee giving. While the company sought approval from leadership on the charities and timing for fundraising activities, deciding on the fundraising events was really a grassroots effort and employees were empowered to brainstorm with their teams on how to do raise funds for a great cause.



During a fundraising drive last year, employees donated money to see their managers dress up in superhero costumes. Managers had to wear a superhero costume for a day at work if their team raised a certain amount. All the managers ended up decked out in superhero gear for a day.



Q&A WITH



Lee Strom, Vice President of Marketing

What does giving back to this charity mean to SanMar? Our charitable giving ties back to our SanMar Family Values, including "do the right thing" and "make a difference." It feels really good to make a positive impact in the communities where we live and work, and it's important to SanMar to be a good neighbor.

What advice do you have for other companies that want to start a charitable giving program? Put a face to the cause. Last year, a past beneficiary of a youth homeless shelter shared her very personal story. She spoke about how the charity impacted her life and it was truly inspiring. I think it made a huge difference in the success of our two-week fundraising event. And, of course, start planning your events early, engage a hard-working events committee, share your goals and communicate, communicate, communicate.

What has been the most unexpected result of your company's giving program? The team unity and company-wide sense of pride from giving back. Plus, the opportunity for people who don't generally cross paths to interact in new and fun ways. We were surprised by the level of giving last year and felt so much love in each building. It was a very special thing to be a part of. And we raised well more than our goal, which was humbling.



One of the Edwards Garment bowling teams poses at the event benefitting Big Brothers/Big Sisters.

EDWARDS GARMENT

Supported charities: Supplier Edwards Garment has been working with local nonprofit groups for more than 40 years and regularly supports over a dozen programs that make a positive impact. President and CEO Gary Schultz says, "Our goal is to assist local agencies in our community that impact the lives of youth and family members. We are committed to building and strengthening community bonds in a positive and supportive way. Our core values are built around heritage, compassion and humility which makes community outreach a part of our daily life."

Program structure: Edwards has a foundation that organizes the funding for its philanthropic giving. However, financial support is only one leg of the Edwards commitment. The company works with local nonprofits to help attain their goals of financial support, social interaction and community engagement. An associate committee at the company meets regularly to review requests from nonprofits and to make recommendations on philanthropic events. Minutes from the meetings are distributed to the management group for review with employees and posted on bulletin boards throughout the company. If Edwards will be participating in a large event, Schultz will make an announcement at one of the monthly meetings he holds with associates.

Q&A
WITH



Taraynn Lloyd,
Vice President of Marketing

What does giving back mean to Edwards Garment? Edwards encourages associates to actively engage with local nonprofits to build that strong community bond. For example, when the Salvation Army asked for garment donations for job seekers, employees responded with a large donation of career apparel. When Big Brothers/Big Sisters asked if Edwards wanted to participate in its bowling fundraisers, Edwards associates put six teams together to help raise funds for their programs. When Communities in Schools inquired if we had associates who could work with children on their reading skills, many Edwards employees stepped up to the challenge.

What advice do you have for other companies that want to start a charitable giving program? Working with any community group takes time and commitment. Keep in mind that participation doesn't always mean you need to raise funds for the local nonprofit. Many times just getting involved is all that is required.

What has been the most unexpected result of your company's giving program? Words can't express the joy on people's faces when they are committed to a cause that strengthens our youth, families and our community. It is infectious.

Three Tips For Starting A Giving Program

1 Start In The C-Suite

A genuine commitment from the C-suite and active involvement toward pursuit of the desired outcomes is key for successful workplace-giving programs. Identify an executive team member who is excited and committed to the cause. The person's enthusiasm will be transferred throughout the organization, and this visible support gives employees the "permission" to dedicate their time and dollars as well.

2 Empower Employee Choice

Enabling and encouraging employees to easily and conveniently donate to the causes they care about (not just the causes you choose for them) is a clear best practice for workplace giving programs. Giving is personal, and different people have different causes. Most people today—especially younger ones—don't want someone else deciding where their money goes.

3 Align Causes With Company Values

Give choices but create a bias to corporate-supported charities through matching. Choose community causes that:

- Align causes with corporate goals and pillars
- Support general cause areas that resonate with most employees, such as education, health or the environment
- Provide assistance in times of crisis, such as supporting local food banks during times of need, hospitals, American Red Cross, etc.



Socks are the most requested and least donated item in homeless shelters, according to Hanes's Rachel Newman.

HANES/CHAMPION

Supported charities: Hanes for Good is HanesBrands' corporate social responsibility program focused on environmental stewardship, workplace quality and community building. Under Hanes for Good, supplier Hanes has two primary charitable giving programs: The Hanes Sock Drive, a national program through which Hanes has donated more than 1.9 million socks to the Salvation Army since the program started in 2009, and Hanes4Education, a program that is exclusive to the decorated apparel industry. Additionally, in 2016 HanesBrands and its employees raised \$2.4 million for United Way of Forsyth County, North Carolina, and surrounding communities, as well as donating food items and volunteer hours to community agencies as part of its award-winning campaign. United Way of North Carolina awarded Hanes with its Spirit of North Carolina Award for campaign excellence, the fourth consecutive Spirit Award and ninth total earned by Hanes and its employees. Hanes and its employees have given more than \$39 million since 1999 to help fund an array of services in Forsyth County.

Program structure: In 2016, Hanes expanded the Hanes Sock Drive effort by coordinating the collection of new socks at 160 HanesBrands Outlet stores nationwide. Store employees distributed the donated socks to local nonprofit organizations. As part of the company's campaign, employees also donated 10,500 nonperishable food items and \$11,000 to Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest N.C., one of United Way's partners. As part of a Day of Caring, more than 400 headquarters employees volunteered at 13 local community agencies. Employee volunteers contributed thousands of volunteer hours performing various tasks at the agencies including landscaping, painting, administrative duties and more.

Hanes4Education allows screen-print suppliers and their customers to support K-12 schools through a unique cash-rebate offer where schools can earn cash with every purchase of Hanes and Champion products. Schools can earn 10 cents for each Hanes® or Champion® printed apparel item ordered through suppliers, with checks going directly to the K-12 school designated by the customer. Hanes has donated more than \$1 million to schools since starting the Hanes4Education program in 2011.

Source: Jana Taylor, Benevity, www.benevity.org

Q&A WITH



Rachel Newman, Director of Sales & Marketing

What does giving back to this charity mean to your company?

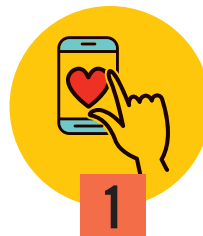
Especially in cold weather, access to clean, dry socks can, at the minimum, protect from misery, and at the most save lives. It's a daily reminder that a small donation or kindness can make a big difference. As a cash rebate program, it is easy to see how Hanes4Education benefits local schools. It's a simple and direct way to support K-12 schools in our employees' communities at a time when schools are very much in need. Many employees use the United Way campaign to develop connections with local nonprofits and continue to volunteer and support them long after the United Way campaign is over. It's important to us that we can improve and enrich the communities where we live and with which we are involved.

What advice do you have for other companies that want to start a charitable giving program? With both the Hanes Sock Drive and Hanes4Education, we framed our programs around our core products—they are not peripheral programs but are aligned with what we do every day. If a program is not directly connected to what you do and who you are, you run the risk of losing momentum.

Also, with Hanes4Education, we made sure that there is absolutely no work for the supplier other than ensuring that the invoice they provide the customer specifies that Hanes products were purchased. We wanted to make it easy for customers to participate and remove any barriers to helping schools.

What has been the most unexpected result of your company's giving program? It's amazing how quickly a 10-cent rebate can add up to real money that makes an impact on schools. It's energizing to know that every sale you make has the potential to help a school.

Four Simple Ways Any Organization Can Give Back



1

Coordinate charitable donations.

Take up a regular donation for a local charity or other community organization. From providing a collection box where customers can donate money, food or clothing items, to adding a donation opportunity on the customer's invoice, make it easy for your customers to share in charitable donations. One note: if you are asking customers for donations, make sure your company is contributing donations as well.



2

Become a sponsor.

Give back to the community by sponsoring a 5K run, a youth sports team, local holiday parade or other community event. It's a great way to support your community and has the added benefit of providing advertising and exposure for your business.



3

Donate products or services.

If you have extra promotional items such as apparel or school supplies in your inventory or as showroom samples, donate them to a community shelter or school. The Kids In Need foundation is a great option and one that PPAI partners with regularly. Find out more at www.kinf.org.



4

Mentor job-seekers.

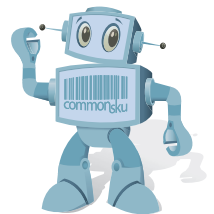
Offer a mentoring or job skills training program during the holiday season, or provide part-time job opportunities to those who need extra income. It's a great way to provide on-the-job training so that those in need can acquire new skills. **PPB**

Source: PCT December 9, 2014

Julie Richie is a former associate editor for PPB

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+ How To Increase Revenue-Generating Activities

It's as simple as spending your time in the right places **page 60**.

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Lifelong Learners

Educate continuing education and corporate training clients on the benefits of promotional products

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Power Up

Boost any brand's reach with popular technology tools that upgrade home, work and travel experiences.

Every day it seems there's some new technology available to make our lives more efficient, safer, more fun or increasingly productive. You won't find many purses or backpacks without a USB or a portable power bank in one of their zippered compartments these days. And as for phone charging cords, if you don't have one with you, it's probably because you forgot it at home, in your car or, worse, at your hotel room in the city you just left. According to smartertravel.com, phone chargers are the No. 1 item left in hotel rooms.

With tech products incorporated into practically every aspect of our lives, they are natural brand promoters, even when left behind.

Here are some of the newer technology products that can help put your clients' brands in their customers' hands, on their desks or in their homes.



POWER

Technology At Work



This aluminum and rubberized plastic, .9-ounce **high-tech pen** looks like a regular pen but is full of surprises. With its solid construction and soft-grip finish, it features a stylus, twist-retract ballpoint and hidden USB drive in memory sizes up to 32GB. Imprint a logo or message in vivid full-color process, or laser engrave.

iClick / PPAI 254537 / www.iclick.com



The new **All-in-One Retractable Charging and Syncing Cable** for Apple and Android mobile devices is a colorful (and useful) way to showcase a brand. This unique charging cable extends to 23 inches and has an eight-pin connector on one side, and a micro USB charger on the other side.

Ariel Premium Supply, Inc. / PPAI 161650 / www.arielpremium.com



Attach the **Hawkeye adapter** to any USB cable and activate the alarm to keep an eye on your charging cable and anything that is connected to it. It's great for use in public locations such as coffee shops or airports. If the device and charger are disconnected, there's an audio alert.

Hit Promotional Products / PPAI 113910 / www.hitpromo.net



This eco-friendly **custom-shaped USB promo flash drive** is perfect for your next event where you need your presentation to shine. Choose from multiple colors and imprint areas to maximize your brand's logo. With 1GB of storage space, this flash drive can hold over 10,000 pages of text and is reusable and non-toxic, meeting RoHS standards to reduce hazardous substances. Plus, SmartDrive™ technology is available to remotely update files on any of Emperor's USB drives, even after they've been distributed to the end user.

Emperor / PPAI 519514 / www.emperormktg.com



This 2.4GHz wireless **Power Mouse™ M88** folds up for easy portability and includes an ultra-precise 1000-dpi optical sensor and scroll wheel. Never lose the wireless USB dongle—it stores in a magnetic slot in the mouse when not in use. The ergonomic folding arch design nests in palm of a user's hand and attracts attention to the branding.

All In One / PPAI 111343 / www.allinonline.com

Out And About



This pocket-sized 5.1-inch by 4.3-inch **solar LED light** is completely powered by the sun, with no additional batteries needed. Set it in direct sunlight and it lasts up to seven hours on a single charge. It's inflatable, collapsible, lightweight and fully waterproof. Pitch this light to outdoor organizations, Boy/Girl Scouts, schools, automotive companies, travel companies, etc. It's perfect for emergency kits, survival gear, storms, blackouts, travel and car trouble.

Yorkn, Inc. / PPAI 599060 / www.yorkn.com



Great for customer and employee gifts, event giveaways, recruiting and on-pack promotions, **digital reward cards** include popular items like digital movies, movie tickets, digital and print magazines, musical downloads, travel savings and more. Customers can choose the reward they want most. All digital cards are printed with full-color, custom-branded artwork. Users go to the provided website, enter their code and follow simple instructions to redeem.

Media Tree / PPAI 192068 / www.mediatreerewards.com

Perfect for adventurers, this ultra-portable **water-resistant Bluetooth speaker** has a flexible mount. With a built-in microphone and its unique flexible "tail" mount, it is designed to be completely universal in any situation. Easily attach it on a bike, shower head or a backpack and enjoy music while you're doing your favorite activities.

Aiia Limited / PPAI 624878 / www.enjoy-aiia.com



These new Bluetooth 4.0 CSR **BoomPods Sportpods Race earphones** have an IPX6 sweat-resistant rating, an ergonomic in-ear design and easy-touch controls on the clip-on pod with tactile recognition. They include one set of memory-foam ear tips and three different sizes of rubber ear buds as well as a micro/USB cable for recharging, a drawstring pouch for storage and an instruction manual. They have a listening range of 33 feet for up to four consecutive hours with a 1.5-hour recharge time.

Starline USA, Inc. / PPAI 112719
www.starline.com



High-Tech Home

Using a free smartphone app for Apple or Android, the **Socket2Me** turns home automation into a full-color branding opportunity. Remotely control power outlets from anywhere to simplify life or control energy usage. The Socket2Me connects with Wi-Fi and also has a built-in USB adapter.

OrigAudio / PPAI 421483 / www.origaudio.com



Source Safely

When choosing tech products powered by lithium-ion batteries, heed these sourcing tips from product safety expert Leeton Lee at ComplyBox to protect your clients and your business' reputation:



Carefully screen your vendors and factories, and establish your quality and safety expectations.

Ensure that the product is properly designed and use third-party labs to review.

Verify all raw materials, components and subassemblies used in the product.

Require safety features such as regulators, safety circuits and fuses.

Test the finished products to verify the factory's product safety claims, using a nationally recognized test laboratory such as UL.

Obtain copies of all testing and certification verifications from your vendors.

Ensure that all packaging, labeling, instructions and warnings are complete and accurate.

Follow all applicable transportation and labeling requirements for lithium battery products.

Consult with industry experts such as your test lab for guidance.



This **light switch** is powered by cutting edge COB (chip on board) technology. It offers extreme light intensity to illuminate the darkest spaces and includes a magnetic back, Velcro™ hook-and-loop fastener strips and mounting holes for securing to any surface. It includes an on/off switch, four AAA batteries and shines for more than 70 hours.

Alexander Manufacturing Co. / PPAI 113670
www.alexandermc.com

This compact **wireless speaker** can answer questions, play music, control home automation products and integrate with additional services thanks to its Alexa assistant-included technology. It connects to your devices and network via Wi-Fi and Bluetooth, enabling you to use it on the go. Its 360-degree speaker is equipped with iLuv's jAura sound enhancement technology and it can play music for three hours thanks to its internal battery. It complies with FCC and RoHS regulations.

Hirsch Gift, Inc. / PPAI 221823 / www.hirschgift.com



TimeBox is a smart music gadget that features a Bluetooth speaker, lamp, digital palette, thermometer and alarm clock all in one. Use the interactive mobile app to create your own graphics and more. It includes a professional sleep-aid system to improve sleep quality with a handful of nature sounds. The TimeBox will continue to grow and evolve with its software updates.

Twintech Industry, Inc. / PPAI 261545
www.twintechpromo.com

Case Studies



More Bang For The Promotional Buck

A company that was a prior sponsor of a large industry trade show needed a new way to boost visibility at the show within a much smaller budget. They distributed 3,000 credit card-shaped USB drives pre-loaded with information about the company and its services to show attendees. Custom lanyards allowed attendees to

wear the drive around their neck and made them walking billboards for the company during the trade show. In exchange for wearing the lanyards, recipients were allowed free, unlimited access to the relaxation booth at the trade show, and their names were placed in a drawing for a free gift inside the booth.

Source: HALO Branded Solutions, Inc.



Savvy Student Solution

The University of Minnesota was looking for something unique and useful that would get students excited about its student unions and activities. They chose the Charge It Up Power Bank. It features a USB output and micro USB input and includes a cord. With the 2200 mAh lithium battery, phones can be charged 1.5 times before having to re-charge the power bank using a wall charger (not included) or laptop. Students and staff alike were excited to receive the power banks, which were given to students as prizes and given to staff for contributing to a fundraiser. Since they are used repeatedly, the chargers served as a frequent reminder of the UMN Student Unions & Activities brand. The URL imprinted on the charger helps increase website traffic.

Source: Magellan Promotions, LLC

PPAI Webinars

Take The Next Step

Learn more about elevating your approach to your business by attending a free PPAI webinar.



Technology: Know The Rules And Dangers When Shipping Electronics



Speaker:

George Kerchner, Executive Director, PRBA and Senior Regulatory Analyst with the Washington, D.C., law firm Wiley Rein LLP.



Webinar Overview:

If you ship batteries and other technology products, this session is a must. Shipping regulations, intended to protect against hazards, are different for air, land and sea, as well as international and domestic transportation. These regulations have often been regarded as complex and difficult to understand for many shippers, and new, more stringent shipping regulations have gone into effect in the past year. Learn firsthand what your obligations are under these complex regulations. This session is an elective for the Product Safety Aware program.



Free to PPAI members, \$15 for nonmembers



Access this webinar at onlineeducation.ppai.org

Julie Richie is a former associate editor for PPB.

Color Your Campaign.



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#CLEANING-CLOTH Microfiber Cleaning Cloth 7" Screen Mobile Phone Cleaners

- Clean up the competition with our microfiber cleaning cloths. They are dye sublimation printed with full color (back side is white).
- These microfiber cleaning cloths are a great eyeglass, sunglasses, lens, screens, mobile phones, and computer accessories cleaners.
- Ideal for any portable or mobile device including laptops, tablets, and LCD screens.
- Removes marks and smears without applying any hazardous chemicals or scratching.

As Low As **\$1.39(r)**

#MICROFIBER-PCH Dye Sublimated Microfiber Phone Wallet Pouch or Sleeve

- Great microfiber cloth mobile case and sleeve value coming in dye sublimated bright, vibrant, and clear colors!
- This mobile phone pouch or wallet is also perfect for carrying identification, room keys, cash, or credit cards.

As Low As **\$2.03(r)**



#MOUSE-PAD-6S Computer Mouse Pad - Dye Sublimated - 6"

- Printed with four color dye sublimation process, these mouse pads will be sure to brighten up your office with high color and definition printing.
- Great promotional product for giveaways, promotions, or just for fun!

As Low As **\$1.19(r)**

#TOWEL-COOL Cooling Towel - Dye Sublimated

- Printed with a stunning full color dye sublimation process, these cooling towels sure to impress at the gym, pool, beach, outdoor workout, or any sporting event.
- Great promotional product for giveaways, promotions, or just for fun!
- Stay cool with our new dye sublimated cooling towel!

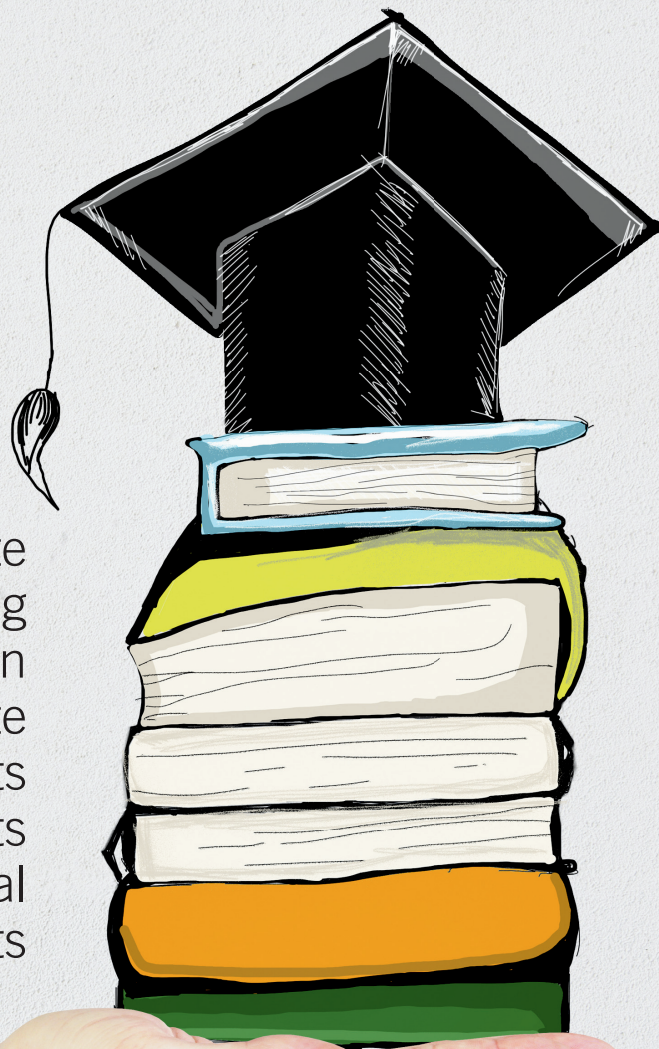
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ADMINTS
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Educate
continuing
education
and corporate
training clients
on the benefits
of promotional
products



Lifelong Learners

Many of us powered through college, or bypassed it altogether, intent on jumping into the deep end of the career pool. Little did we know that learning continues even after the job begins. In fact, corporate training programs and continuing education opportunities are now the norm for many industries, and groups that specialize in producing and providing career training are just as much in need of profitable promotional ideas.

Continuing education (CE) and workforce development are in more demand than ever; nearly 50 percent of U.S. adults participate in some type of formal CE that is not full-time enrollment, according to the National Center for Education Statistics. These non-traditional learners were the focus of a \$450-million allocation by the federal government in 2014, which was earmarked for the promotion of CE and workforce development.

Companies that encourage or even require employees to participate in training or continuing education can make the most of their efforts by tying incentives to employee

training and development goals. Sean Roark, CPIM, co-owner and executive vice president of Spring, Texas-based distributor Promopros/Incentpros, and president of the Incentive Marketing Association, says incentives are the key ingredient to making a corporate training program better.

"Incentives give someone a point to hang their hat on," says Roark, who designs programs for his clients to help improve participation and performance in their workplace training efforts. "If I can get someone to take fewer sick days because they're working to get a Cuisinart,

that's still fewer days they're not at work. Once a habit of taking unnecessary days off changes, the new best practice becomes its own habit, and equally hard to break. I like to say that I get people to do the right thing for the 'wrong' reasons."

However, says Roark, providing incentives for corporate training does more than just inspire immediate action; once employees are rewarded for participating, or recognized for their efforts, they start to look for things to do right. "The long-term positive effects that are created by that attachment remain with the employee

after the program stops," he says.

When helping clients select items that will convey the right message, it's important to make the distinction between promotional products and incentives, Roark adds. "A promotional product is a vehicle for communicating a brand or a message. Incentives are vehicles for communicating appreciation and gratitude from the giver. Understanding that subtle difference is something I recommend people have the best grasp of before presenting a program to a prospective client."

Supplement continuing education and corporate training programs with products like these



Studios employees will appreciate a **memo tape dispenser** that lets them create the right size sticky memo every time, from 10 meters of tape. Customize it with a large britePix imprint.

[BIC Graphic USA](#) / PPAI 114187
www.bicgraphic.com

Give a sweet reward with **gift boxes** containing premium chocolates or fresh-roasted nuts. Choose from five colors and more than 15 treats.

[Maple Ridge Farms, Inc.](#) / PPAI 114165
www.mapleridge.com



Slip employees this **RFID blocker sleeve** made of special paper that includes a metal alloy to protect debit and credit cards from skimming.

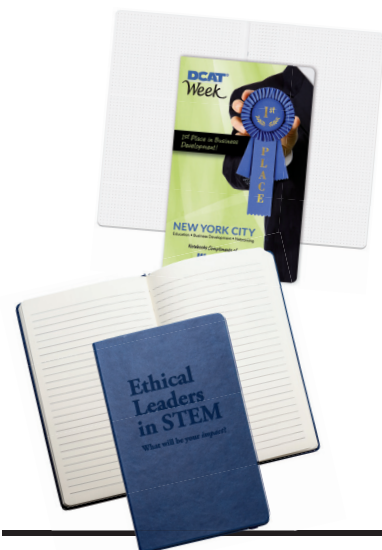
[Fields Manufacturing](#) / PPAI 111951
www.fieldsmfg.com



QUICK TIP

Want To Improve Your Client's Corporate Training Program? Start With These Questions

- 1 What are the client's pain points?**
What are they not achieving that the training program is put in place to achieve?
- 2 What is it about the solution that will excite the trainee?**
What rewards would compel participants to remain attentive and produce desired results?
- 3 What types of rewards define or reflect the importance of those results?**
Always have a clearly defined statistical measurement (increased scores, better attendance, more people getting vaccinated against flu) that defines the success of the use of the incentive.



Let them study in style with a book-bound **Go Journal**. Featuring a leather-like hard cover and debossed logo, the journal has 160 lined pages, a ribbon marker and matching elastic closure. Choose from black, navy, gray and red. Brighten up the training day with a **full-color field journal**. The glossy full-color journal can be customized with one- or four-color process printing on the cover, and is filled with 56 pages of 60-pound white lined paper and finished with two round corners and square back binding.

Drum-Line / PPAI 102565
www.drum-line.com



Health and wellness are top priorities, so these **hand sanitizers with a silicone attachment** in translucent, black or blue are great for reminding employees to stay well. The iced pear-scented gel is 65-percent ethanol, proven to help prevent infection from viruses, fungi and bacteria. Add the SPF 15 broad spectrum **lip balm** for defense against UVA rays.

Raining Rose, Inc. / PPAI 232508
www.lipbalmcompany.com

Never leave employees without office staples; give this **portable office kit**. Mini versions of a stapler, tape dispenser, highlighter and more are all contained in this compact case. Choose from a blue, green, orange, pink or yellow DriMark® Mini Max for the kit.

Beacon Promotions, Inc. / PPAI 113702
www.beaconpromotions.com



Recognize top performers with a **crystal light bulb-shaped trophy** that's perfect for rewarding bright ideas and high achievers, and watch them rise to new challenges with a stainless steel, brain-shaped **metal puzzle pen set**.

Minya International Corp. / PPAI 112523
www.minyausa.com

Students can scribble notes in a pinch and mark them for later review on this **pocket jotter with page markers**. The polypropylene cover also features a 4.5-inch ruler. Inside are five 20-page adhesive-backed page markers, one yellow sticky pad and 40 pages of ruled paper. The cardboard back cover has metal double-ring binding.

Prime Line® / PPAI 112744 / www.primeline.com



An encouraging message programmed into the blades of the patented **LED light-up smart fan** will blow employees away. The powerful, quiet fan plugs into either Android or iOS smartphones with ease, and it can be programmed with up to four messages.

GlobalTech Branding Group, LLC
PPAI 537995 / www.sinowisegroup.com

Top E-Learning Trends For 2017



Mobile Learning

Courses that can be accessed on multiple devices, and mobile apps for offline accessibility



Microlearning

Courses that are shorter than 60 minutes, offering multiple “nuggets” to create a learning path



Gamification

Gamifying corporate learning to create a high-impact experience



Interactive Video

Uses include formal training and performance support



Social Learning

Trainees can network, share, collaborate and exchange ideas

Case Studies From The Industry

Real-World Solutions



Source: BookWear

A healthcare-industry company wanted to recognize staff members for their efforts as customer-facing employees, so they chose a custom “book” that features a gift inside. In this case, the gift was a custom-printed pillow cover. The book itself was printed in full color on both sides and on the spine.

An energy company in West Virginia wanted to improve safety performance throughout its mining operation, so it worked with a local distributor to develop an incentive program that encouraged miners, supervisors and safety directors to observe safety protocols and reduce the number of lost-time accidents.

The football-themed “Safety Bowl” assigned employees to teams, and awarded points that could be redeemed for a variety of items, including outdoor sporting goods, electronics, home appliances and lawn equipment.

As a result of the safety bowl, the energy company experienced its safest year in nearly 100 years of operation. Lost-time accidents were reduced by 47 percent over the previous year, and the company saved upwards of \$5 million.

Source: Incentive Marketing Association

Head Of The Class

A recent survey of more than 6,000 working adults by the Learning Resources Network found respondents are most interested in learning these skills for improving job performance.



- | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------------------|----|----------------------------|
| 1 | Data Analysis | 6 | Entrepreneurship |
| 2 | Social Media For Business | 7 | Supervision And Management |
| 3 | Finance And Accounting For Non-Financial Managers | 8 | Customer Service |
| 4 | Digital Marketing | 9 | Leadership Development |
| 5 | Project Management | 10 | Web Design |

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JOEY GEORGE

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THE POWER OF PROMOTIONS

PPAI #267078

While They're Young

K-12 education remains a market with numerous promotional possibilities. Pair one of these products with your school client's next promotion for top honors.



Congratulate graduates with a ballpoint-click **graduate pen** for a guy or a gal.

Minya International Corp.

PPAI 112523

www.minyausa.com

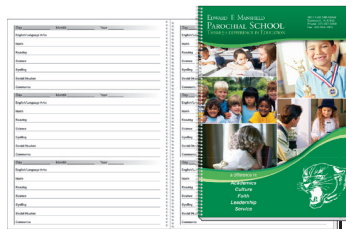


Incoming students start the year off "write" with a classic **composition notebook**. The coil-bound notebook can be printed in one standard color and is filled with 50 perforated, lined sheets in standard rule.

Drum-Line

PPAI 102565

www.drum-line.com



Keep the kids on schedule with a **2017-2018 student school planner**. The 108-page planner includes study tips, communication tips and reference pages for spelling, punctuation and mathematics. A monthly July-June calendar section is included with ample space for daily notations. Customize the cover with a one- or four-color process print.

TruArt Advertising Calendars

PPAI 113270

www.truart.com



Step up the school spirit and keep kids hydrated with an **Oli double-wall acrylic tumbler** complete with translucent lid and matching straw in school colors.

ADG Promotional Products

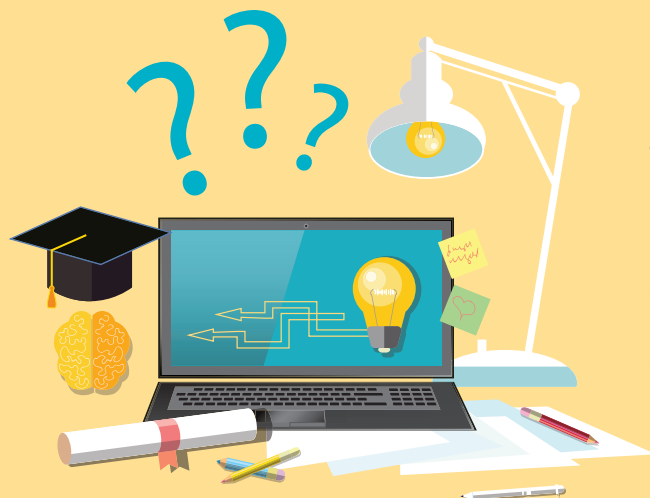
PPAI 111475

www.adgpromo.com



Win the race with youth **Impact shorts** featuring permanent moisture wicking and BodyFreshé treatment to inhibit the growth of odor-causing bacteria. The shorts are made with a six-inch inseam for comfortable coverage and an elastic waistband with interior drawcord. Choose from six colors. Complement the shorts with a youth **Tec tee** made from microfiber poly oXymesh™, treated with BodyFreshé and available in 12 colors.

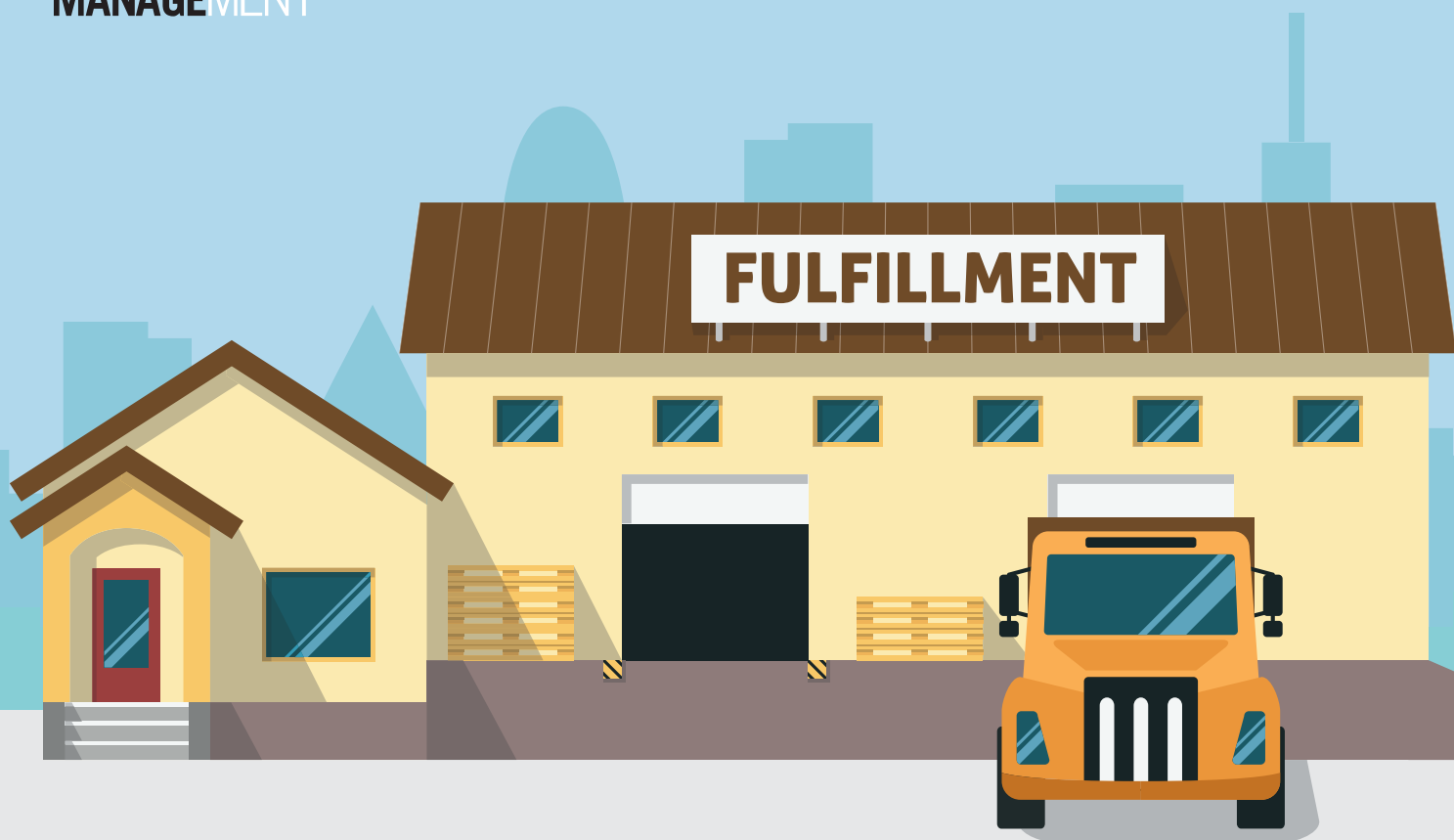
Expert Brand / PPAI 267226 / www.expertbrand.com



Did You Know?

Corporate training traces its roots to apprenticeships and factory schools, which further evolved during the 20th century into individualized instruction, embedded training and integrated performance support. Now, e-learning is quickly becoming the preferred option for professionals who want to advance their educations. Companies such as edX, Lynda.com, ALISON and others offer massive open online courses (MOOCs) from accredited universities as well as certificate programs that can help students move up the corporate ladder. **PPB**

Jen Alexander is associate editor for PPB.



Finding Fulfillment

Everything You Need To Know About Warehousing Inventory

by Tara Mibus

If there's one thing that will make you quickly lose a customer, it's failing to deliver *what* you promise or *when* you promise it. On the flip side, good inventory management will help you build trust with your customers and increase your level of business.

Building up this kind of professional supply chain can be a complex and time-consuming task. That's why many distributors turn to a fulfillment house to handle inventory for them.

But what exactly does a fulfillment house do and how do you find the good ones? After

several inquiries, we decided to find out. We reached out to Chris Manfredini, president of Mavich Branding Group (PPAI 607750), to get his insights as owner of a fulfillment house.

Manfredini shares the basics of what a fulfillment house does, how to know when you need one and tips to choose the right one for you.

What is a fulfillment house?

A fulfillment house serves as a centralized location for inventoried product. Promotional products distributors partner with the fulfillment house to receive, process and deliver orders to end



Chris Manfredini

buyers. Additionally, a fulfillment house can provide value-added services such as custom kitting, packaging, logistics management and real-time reports.

When and why does it make sense for distributors to use a fulfillment house instead of shipping orders themselves?

Consider a fulfillment house when you near your capacity for growth with your current resources. We spent time in the early days of MBG in trial and error, figuring out if a fulfillment house was right for us as a business. We maxed out our 1,500-square-foot building quickly, and if we had hopes of growing any further, we needed space.

Using a fulfillment house gave us the ability to concentrate on what we do best, which is selling products and programs. Our fulfillment house not only saved us time but money when it came to shipping costs. We were finally able to stretch our legs and really see what we were capable of, which paid for all of our fulfillment house costs and then some.

How do I send orders to a fulfillment house? Can I integrate through e-commerce?

Many fulfillment houses use cloud-based technology to make the flow of information extremely easy and accessible. The most well-run fulfillment houses will have software and an internal IT department that syncs with most of the popular online ordering systems. This is crucial to creating an efficient and seamless connection between you and the fulfillment house.

Do fulfillment houses usually require a minimum level of business?

A fulfillment house will ask you for the EAU (estimated annual usage) for products being inventoried and the potential for

account growth. Based on these facts, they will plan best practices and pricing for your program.

If you are thinking of using a fulfillment house, you should collect this information from your current business data and analyze your volume. If the volume exceeds your own capabilities, has the potential for growth and can counterbalance the costs of implementing the program (including both time and hard costs), then this should be an easy business decision.

What fees should I expect? Will using a fulfillment house still allow me to be competitive on my prices?

When getting involved with a fulfillment house, expect a setup charge, inventory receiving fee (product inbound) and then a pick, pack and ship fee (product outbound). If you are bringing a sizable account with a high inventory turnover rate, you could negotiate with the fulfillment house to waive the setup fee. As for the inventory receiving fees and pick, pack and ship fees, you should plan for five to 10 cents per piece. Any additional requests, such as polybag, hang tags, etc., will also result in additional fees.

If you have ever participated in order fulfillment, you will quickly understand the hassle and costs of setting up software, managing inventory and physically picking and packing orders. Even though a fulfillment house might cut into your profits, the benefits are far reaching. With lower shipping rates, space to chase larger accounts and your valuable time being saved overall, you will be able to sell more, break into new markets and ultimately increase revenues.

What are the most common errors when starting to work with a fulfillment house?

What best practices should I follow to avoid problems or miscommunications?

The most common obstacle we see from our clients and partnering distributors is the lack of understanding—not of the fulfillment house process but of their own customers' program. Do not rush into using a third-party fulfillment center without analyzing the scope of the requirements and, most importantly, the expected volumes. After you collect all critical information, you can confidently determine whether your program will be successful and profitable.

Should I be concerned handing off my client list to a fulfillment house? What steps should be taken to protect myself?

This was one of my major concerns when I had to use a third-party fulfillment house. You have worked very hard to nurture and grow your client base and the last thing you want is to hand over the 'holy grail' of your company. Most fulfillment houses will refrain from signing contractual documents such as a non-disclosure or non-compete agreement, but it's up to you to establish and communicate expectations up front with your fulfillment house to protect any confidential information or procedures of interaction that might occur between your fulfillment house and your customer.

The precautions you take with a fulfillment house are no different than the precautions you would

Even though a fulfillment house might cut into your profits, the benefits are far reaching. With lower shipping rates, space to chase larger accounts and your valuable time being saved overall, you will be able to sell more, break into new markets and ultimately increase revenues.



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Promotional Advertising Specialties

Fulfillment centers may claim they have been in business for years or currently manage large accounts, but this does not mean they are a perfect fit for you. Take the time to interview them, asking key questions pertaining to your program.

take when choosing a supplier or partnering decorator. There must be a level of trust, so always do your due diligence on a fulfillment house. I recommend an online search for credible reviews of the company and to look for any red flags. Also, ask the fulfillment house for referrals from other distributors and contact them about their first-hand experiences working with that fulfillment house. Lastly, don't be afraid to ask the fulfillment house directly for their current procedures if a distributor's customer contacts them directly. They should be more than willing to share this with you.

At MBG, our policy is simple:

once a distributor becomes our partner (customer), their customer becomes our customer but *only* through that distributor.

We hold ourselves to the highest business ethics and have the belief that by working together with distributors, we can successfully grow both of our businesses.

How do I find a good fulfillment house?

Fulfillment centers may claim they have been in business for years or currently manage large accounts, but this does not mean they are a perfect fit for you. Take the time to interview them, asking key questions

pertaining to your program.

Some of the basic questions to discuss with your fulfillment center include their ability to connect with your e-commerce system, whether they can meet your expected demands of growth, typical order turnaround rate, after-ship tracking information, return policy and what additional fulfillment services they offer that separate them from the other fulfillment houses.

Remember, this partnership will be the representation to *your* customer of how you operate as a company, so it's crucial to find a fulfillment house that you can trust to meet your needs. **PPB**

Tara Mibus is marketing communications coordinator at PPAI business partner SAGE.

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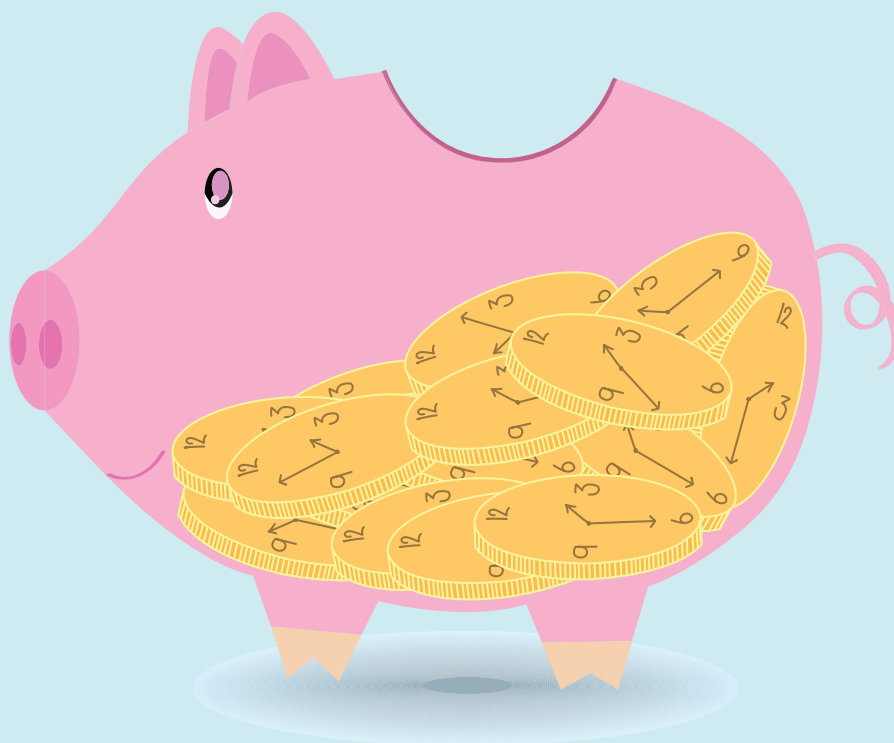
How To Increase Revenue-Generating Activities

It's as simple as spending your time in the right places.

by Caryn Kopp

I give a lot of seminars on business development—how to get in the door with prospects, how to get better outcomes from prospect meetings, how to overcome objections, how to increase sales with current clients—you get the idea.

Whether I have business owners, VPs of sales, sellers or non-sellers responsible for generating business in the room, everyone has the same problem. They have no time. They say to me, “These ideas are gold. But my schedule is packed; I am swamped. How can I find time to implement what I just learned?”



If this describes you too, here is an exercise you can do to find time in your busy day to devote to business development. I call it the R and N exercise.

R and N Exercise



Keep a log of how you spend your time for two weeks.



For each activity put an “R” next to any time blocks that are REVENUE-generating activities (new business, not business you would have had anyway). Put an “N” next to any NON-REVENUE-generating activities (including generating reports, answering customer or internal inquiries, filling out paperwork, etc.).



Total the hours per week spent on revenue-generating activities. If it's two hours per week or less, it's not enough. The more time the better, but there is definitely a threshold where it's not enough to make a difference.



Identify which non-revenue-generating activities don't need to be done at all moving forward and which ones need to be done but can be done by someone else (think carefully before you decide that you are the only person who can do a non-revenue-generating activity). You may need to discuss your list with your manager to get buy-in.

There is a direct correlation between time spent and success as long as you're doing business development right. If you spend more time you will have more results—it's that simple.

A business owner I know has 10 salespeople. After doing this exercise, he discovered each seller was spending approximately three hours per week answering customer inquiries. The owner was shocked because he had put a system in place whereby the operations people would answer inquiries. When we discussed it further, the sellers said they answered inquiries themselves because they felt the operations people took too long to get back

to the customers. They were protecting their relationships, but using time that could have been devoted to business development. The fix was communication.

First, the two groups discussed the definition of reasonable response time and agreed on what was acceptable. Then, the sellers introduced the operations people to their customers in order to springboard relationships. Finally, the receptionist was trained to direct customer inquiries

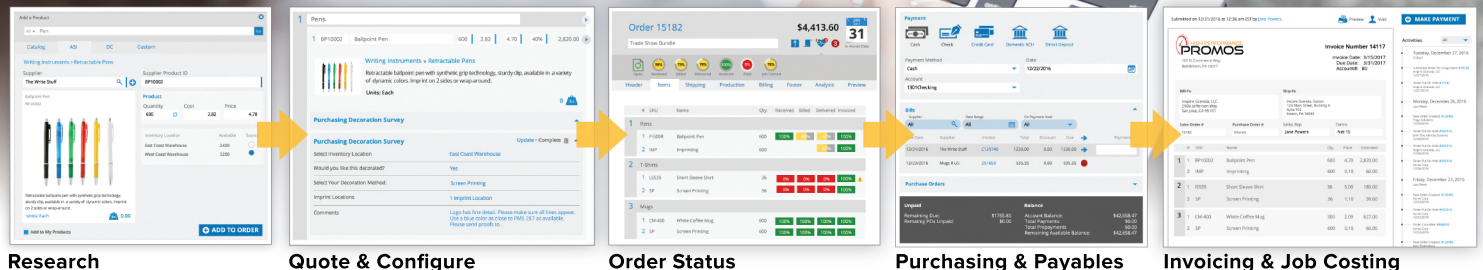
for existing orders directly to operations and new orders directly to sales. As a result, the company gained 30 additional hours *per week* for revenue-generating activities. That is significant and came about as a result of doing the simple R and N exercise.

There is a direct correlation between time spent and success as long as you're doing business development right. If you spend more time you will have more results—it's that simple.

Caryn Kopp is the Chief Door Opener® at Kopp Consulting. She has helped thousands of business owners and salespeople secure initial meetings with high-level decision makers in almost every major company including P&G, Pfizer, GE, Merck, Verizon, AT&T, Time Warner, Kraft, Target and CBS. Reach her at www.koppconsultingusa.com.

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Millennial Spotlight

A look at how promotional products measure up to Millennial expectations.

page 74.

64 **FAST FORWARD**
GENERALLY SPEAKING

68 **PRODUCT RESPONSIBILITY**
SPEAK UP, SPEAK OUT NOW



A Nod To Nostalgia

Busy Beaver Button Co. preserves the past and protects the planet while making pin-backed masterpieces and more.

page 72



WATER COOLER

Generally Speaking

Knowing a little about a lot can be just as beneficial as being a specialist

You know the phrase ‘Jack of all trades, master of none’? The philosophy of knowing a little about a lot doesn’t always jibe with long-term business success. Mastery of one skill or subject makes one more valuable to employers; experts and thought leaders are highly sought after in sports, academia and industry.

But those of us who tinker, who constantly look for new skills to acquire (if not master) and new subjects to learn, can be just as valuable to the workplace. Imagine if the one thing you did really well, better than your peers, was suddenly automated or phased out. Where would that leave you?

Rather than trading one knowledge philosophy for another, consider adopting the T strategy. The T strategy aligns generalization, or breadth of knowledge, with specialization, or depth of knowledge. To visualize it, plot out the subjects you know fairly well on a horizontal line. From each subject of which you feel you have extensive knowledge, draw a vertical line down.

Looking at your drawing, does it appear that you have extensive knowledge of one subject, or a little knowledge about many subjects? If you are more of a generalist, consider brushing up on just a handful of topics or skill sets. Don’t just learn about something, though—learn how to put it to use. Develop a personal project to apply your newfound knowledge and use the results to build a portfolio.

If specialization has been your mantra for years, consider learning more about a field that’s related to the one you’re an expert in. Look for interactive learning opportunities to apply your new knowledge while you’re still learning; more than just quizzes at the end of a lesson, true interactive learning asks you to apply what you just learned to a real-life (simulated) situation. Once you’ve built a foundation for your new skill, find a way to make it enhance what you’re already great at.

DR. NADINE BURKE HARRIS

**MOM, DOCTOR,
AND FOUNDER OF
THE CENTER FOR
YOUTH WELLNESS.**

LET’S ROLL UP OUR SLEEVES.



Shinola/Detroit LLC is running a series of ads, such as this one, that celebrate the American worker.

Photo courtesy Shinola/Detroit LLC.

AD-ITIVES

Exalting Enterprise

Shinola campaign celebrates the American worker in series of billboards, murals

In the heart of gritty Detroit, luxury goods maker Shinola is aiming to boost the visibility of what makes America great—its workers. The company, whose journals are offered in the promotional products industry by Delray Beach, Florida-based supplier The Book Company, launched a series of billboards and murals that tell the story of enterprising people who made opportunities for themselves in their respective communities. Shinola also is running print ads in the *Detroit Free Press* this month.

Chief Marketing Officer Bridget Russo told Crain’s *Detroit Business Press* in March that the campaign “embodies the American spirit of rolling up our sleeves and getting stuff done.” This spirit is what Shinola also wants to keep alive in Detroit and in other U.S. locations where it assembles watches, leather goods and bicycles.

“The underlying message will always be jobs, workforce development and people who are paving the way either within our four walls or outside of our four walls doing great things in their community to move their community,” Russo added.



FIVE MINUTES WITH Olivier Van Migem and Michael Reisbaum, *Reflective Shopper*



Olivier Van Migem



Michael Reisbaum

Lighting The Way

Four years ago, in a dark parking lot, Olivier Van Migem ran into someone leaving a supermarket—with his car. The pedestrian was unharmed, thankfully, and Van Migem left the incident with a new idea. “I strongly believe in destiny,” says Van Migem, who at the time was manufacturing reusable bags. The encounter inspired him to add reflective trim to those bags for better visibility in dark environments. Thus, the Reflective Shopper was born.

Since entering the promotional products market as a supplier, owner Van Migem and his team have expanded their fully patented offerings from reflective reusable totes to bags with custom designs that can be colored in by the end user, and reflective bags designed for use by children who go trick-or-treating on Halloween.

PPB spoke with Van Migem, who is based in Antwerp, Belgium, and Michael Reisbaum, U.S. director of operations who is based in West Nyack, New York, about bringing reflective shopping bags to the global promotional products industry.

PPB You offered your bags in Europe prior to entering the U.S. market; why?

Van Migem When I visited the production factory in Spain, I learned that there are five different ways trim can be added to the bags. So I secured five different model patents. But in the U.S. it can take 18 to 24 months to secure a patent; now, our patents are recognized in Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Turkey, Australia, India and Russia and South Africa,

as well as in the U.S. and Europe. We’re committed to defending our patents, ensuring our distributor partners are fully protected from imitators.

PPB Why did you transition from offering your bags through other suppliers to becoming a supplier yourselves?

Van Migem The bag was not being marketed [as a unique item], and at the end of 2016 I decided I needed to find a solution. In 2017 we started our business in the U.S., launching at The PPAI Expo in Las Vegas. The big difference with us is the way we approach business—acting not as a supplier but as a true partner.

PPB What’s your go-to-market strategy as a partner to your distributors?

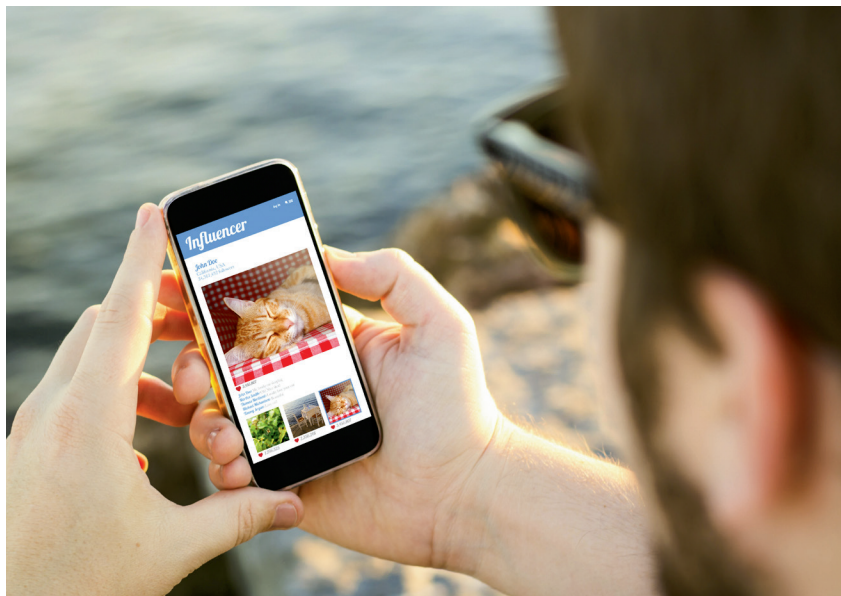
Reisbaum We both have the entirety of our experience in the [promotional products] marketplace as distributors. Our product is not an item that can be sold by simply sending someone a catalog; we don’t want to be in some bucket of suppliers who offer a little bit of everything. We want to help communicate its value to our distributor partners, so we are going to help them come up with selling solutions. We ask them, ‘Help us create the best presentation for your client.’



Reflective Shopper reusable totes are designed to increase visibility for the user and the brands that cater to them.

PPB Bags are the second most popular promotional product category in the U.S. How does yours stand out in this crowded segment?

Van Migem We do not sell bags, we sell a concept. Our concept fulfills the values of the biggest companies in the world—sustainability, safety, creativity (coloring edition) and great visibility for brands. Not only are we taking care of the environment, but we are also taking care of the clients. Our concept is not a safety item, but it will increase the visibility in traffic of pedestrians during the darker period of the day. It’s innovative, dynamic and socially responsible. I believe in the reusable tote’s sustainability. People need to understand sustainability—it is being able to use a product as long as possible.



MARKET SHARE

Under The Influence

Up your outreach game with influencer marketing

From superfans to brand ambassadors, the people who love products and the companies that produce them are the new key to successful marketing campaigns. Influencer marketing is where it's at for 2017, and to use it successfully, you need to know what it is—and what it isn't.

Influencer marketing hinges on brands finding and inspiring—and in some cases paying—individuals who can extoll the virtues of their product or service to others. YouTube “celebrities” are among the more well-known types of influencers, particularly in the beauty industry.

The strongest partner of influencers is social media. Influencer communications almost always have a strong social media component to their evangelism, and they often produce original content around the product or service they're promoting.

While this may sound like a substitute for traditional word-of-mouth marketing, experts say word-of-mouth marketing is the tool by which key individuals influence their circles—

friends and family. And while nearly all influencer marketing includes word-of-mouth marketing characteristics, not all word-of-mouth marketing is driven by influencers.

Influencer marketing shouldn't be confused with advocate marketing either. The latter relies on incentivizing already-loyal customers to continue promoting a brand, whereas influencers don't necessarily have to be current customers. Additionally, influencers are often paid in the form of compensation or products.

If you think you're ready to pursue influencer marketing as a strategy, concentrate on these points:

- 1 Identify key brand or product influencers who are related to, or part of, your target audience.
- 2 Create a marketing campaign directed toward those influencers.
- 3 Create a secondary marketing campaign for influencers to use in building brand awareness among their audiences.

SELLING POINT

Problem Solved

Customers want solutions. Which ones do your products provide?

Creating a unique value proposition to position your business above your competitors' is a universal challenge. But if that value proposition is anchored by a product or service, you're not hitting the customer's soft targets.

American economist Theodore Levitt once said, “People don't want to buy a quarter-inch drill. They want a quarter-inch hole.” Now imagine that you could anticipate your customers' problems—would you still pitch a product, or would you pitch a solution? How would you develop your approach?

Sonja Jepsen, vice president of consultant relations for Fidelity National Information Services, offered these suggestions in *Entrepreneur* magazine:

- 1 **Treat sales like customer service.** You have to know your customers' needs in order to position what you sell as a unique solution. This requires sales teams to have in-depth knowledge and expertise regarding your product or service. Look at Apple Store employees as an example.
- 2 **Educate the buyer.** Customers who learn how your product solves their problem see the product from a new perspective and can more clearly recognize its value.
- 3 **Get everyone on board.** Solution selling isn't just for salespeople. Each department in your company has an integral role in this new approach to building business.
- 4 **Connect sales and marketing.** A sales ‘liaison’ can help bridge the knowledge gap between sales and marketing, and it can ensure marketing staff are clear about the sales team's needs and can develop leads based on desired demographics and communication preferences. **PPB**

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Speak Up, Speak Out Now

What The Border
Adjustment
Tax Means To
Your Family
And Business.

by Stephen Lamar

Everybody loves tax reform. At least, that's the conventional wisdom in Washington.

And what's not to love? The tax reform plan being discussed in 2017 involves lowering corporate tax rates to 20-25 percent, immediate expensing for capital expenditures, and repealing the much despised "death tax," which imposes an absurdly high inheritance tax on the transfer of wealth and family businesses between generations.

These are all long overdue and all promise to make our tax system fairer, simpler and more internationally competitive.

But there's a catch.

To offset the lost tax revenue that Uncle Sam will no longer collect

because of lower tax rates and other measures, including other provisions not mentioned above, the House Republican leadership is also proposing to "border adjust" all corporate income taxes. The Border Adjustment Tax (BAT) is estimated to raise \$1.2 trillion over 10 years. It does this by denying the current deductibility for cost of goods sold (COGS) when those costs are associated with imports, while excluding all export and foreign-license revenue from income taxes. They are proposing other measures to offset revenue loss, too—like removing the deductions for interest—but this BAT is the big one.

Exporters make out well. Tax-free income seems pretty nice. But what does

this mean for importers?

In plain English, the cost of every imported item or input (fabric to manufacture clothing, for example) would increase by 20-25 percent (depending on your company's corporate tax rate). Although details had not yet been released at press time, the House Republicans' "A Better Way" tax proposal makes it clear that "products, services and intangibles that are imported into the United States will be subject to U.S. tax regardless of where they are produced." This would tax everything you import to sell, including bags and totes, apparel, drinkware, writing instruments and electronics, as well as many things you use that are produced using imported goods, such as

shoes, gasoline, food, cars and trucks. The BAT tax would affect imports from every country, including free trade agreement partners. No exceptions.

Let's see how this works in practice with an overly simplified example.

Suppose you import promotional backpacks at an average import cost of \$10. You pay \$1.76 in tariffs (17.6 percent rate) and overhead—including costs of embroidery in the U.S.—of \$8.74. Your unit sale price is \$21.51, netting a pre-tax profit of \$1.01 and a tax bill (at a rate of 35 percent) of 35 cents.

Under the BAT, the math changes significantly. Your corporate tax rate now drops to 20 percent, which is fantastic. But that lower rate now taxes a much higher base—your profit *and* the price you pay to import the backpack *and* the tariff you pay when you import the backpack. That's right, you pay an income tax on the tariff. Now your total income tax bill explodes to \$2.55, which is seven times the amount you paid before and now means you're paying an effective tax rate of 255 percent.

Gulp!

Clearly, you can't run a business when the government taxes more than 250 percent of your profits. So you will try to pass these costs along—in the form of higher prices. But this may not work in a price-sensitive industry such as ours, as higher prices may force customers to choose a less-taxed advertising medium (print or radio perhaps), lower the number of items purchased or choose less expensive promotional products. You could try to cut overhead, but don't forget that your other costs—

such as energy—are also going to increase since everybody else in the economy will also face their own inflationary pressures due to the BAT.

Proponents tell us that this won't happen. They argue that the BAT will instantaneously cause a substantial increase in the value of the U.S. dollar, immediately lowering the cost of imports, which would shield importers (and their consumers) from cost increases. Yet that scenario—based on a theory that even economists can't agree upon—provides cold comfort.

Most import transactions, and certainly nearly all those in the promotional products industry, are denominated in dollars. Moreover, currency rates are affected by many, many more factors besides trade flows. So the thought that (a) an exchange rate change would happen; (b) if it did, it would happen instantaneously; or (c) that such changes would enable contracts to be easily renegotiated is pure fantasy.

Proponents also argue that the BAT is needed to align U.S. tax policy with that of other countries. They point to the system of value added taxes (VAT) that other countries use to conjure up an imaginary "Made in America" tax. Those VATs are *imposed on imports* from the United States (and other countries) and are *rebated on exports* to the United States (and other countries). Since these VATs are border-adjusted—so goes their logic—it is only fair for the U.S. to do the same. What they fail to mention is that those VATs are border-adjusted sales taxes, while the House-proposed BAT would border adjust the U.S.

corporate income tax.

Moreover, if the U.S. succeeds in doing this, it would be the only country that is border adjusting its income tax.

To make matters worse, enactment of the BAT could easily trigger a tax and trade war, as our trading partners retaliate by imposing countervailing measures. Some have already threatened to do so. In the longer term, the U.S. is likely to see a challenge in the World Trade Organization (WTO), since this plan would appear to violate several key WTO principles. If successful, a WTO challenge would enable other countries to legally impose punitive tariffs on U.S. exports—to the tune of \$385 billion, according to an estimate by the Peterson Institute for International Economics.

It's no wonder small and large businesses alike feel the BAT is an existential threat. A coalition of more than 400 businesses and trade associations, including PPAI and the American Apparel & Footwear Association (AAFA), have come together under the banner of Americans for Affordable Products (AAP) to push for comprehensive tax reform that does not contain the BAT.

So what happens next?

House Republicans expect to publish details of their tax plan before summer, while Senate Republicans, who have expressed concerns over the BAT, are actively exploring other options. The Congressional leadership, along with the White House, has labeled tax reform a priority and most experts agree that some form of tax reform can get approved by this Congress. It's been more than 30 years since the last significant

Two Views Of A Backpack Sale



Current Scenario

\$10
(average import cost)
+
\$1.76
(duties at 17.6% tariff rate)
+
\$8.74
(overhead, including embroidery)

\$20.50 total cost

Sale price: **\$21.51**
Pre-tax profit: **\$1.01**
Income taxes paid: **\$0.35**

After tax profit

\$0.66

Under BAT Proposal

\$10
(average import cost)
+
\$1.76
(duties at 17.6% tariff rate)
+
\$8.74
(overhead, including embroidery)

\$20.50 total cost

Sale price: **\$21.51**
Pre-tax profit: **\$1.01**
Income tax on profit: **\$0.20**
(20% of profit)
Border adjusted tax on import cost: **\$2** (20% of import cost)
Border adjusted tax on duties paid: **\$0.35** (20% of duty paid)
Total tax paid: \$2.55

After tax profit

-\$1.54

Stop The Proposed Border Adjustment Tax

Add your voice to the growing number of industry members opposing the Border Adjustment Tax (BAT). Details of the House Republicans' plan is expected to be published before summer but there may still be time to support the opposition. Contact your member of Congress today and request a reform of the tax code that won't negatively affect American workers. To find out who to call and what to ask for go to cqrcengage.com/ppa/makeacall.

reform of our tax laws, and there is a consensus that the time is right. But the BAT has emerged as a deeply controversial element that may slow down the process or derail it entirely. Although one of the intellectual fathers of the BAT concept believes that tax reform can occur with or without the BAT, proponents continue to insist that the BAT is the glue that holds the

entire tax reform proposal together.

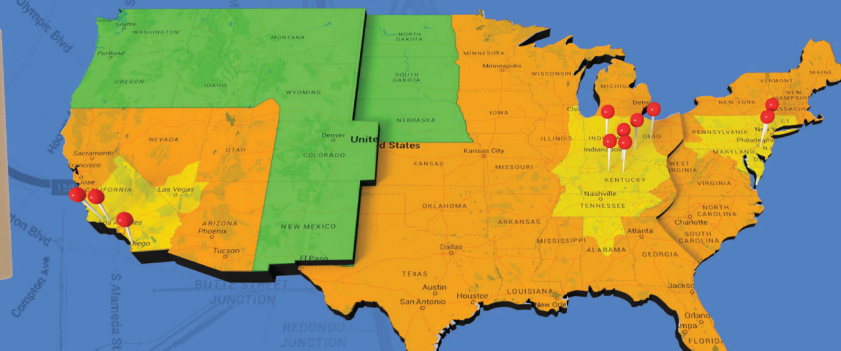
Will tax reform contain some form of the BAT? It's too early to tell. But one thing is certain. Now is the time to speak up to ensure that tax reform is done in a way that benefits our companies and our industry.

And if we are not vocal, we may find that everybody does love tax reform—except us. **PPB**

Stephen Lamar is executive vice president at the American Apparel & Footwear Association (AAFA). He is responsible for the design and execution of AAFA lobbying strategies on a series of issues covering trade, supply chains and brand protection. In these roles, Lamar also advises AAFA member companies on legislation and regulatory policies affecting the clothing and footwear industries. He is also president of the Washington International Trade Association (WITA), a non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to providing a neutral forum for discussion of international trade policy and related issues.

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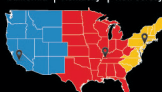
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A Nod To Nostalgia

Busy Beaver Button Co. preserves the past and protects the planet while making pin-backed masterpieces and more.

by Julie Richie

One peek at Chicago, Illinois-based supplier Busy Beaver Buttons's (PPAI 230145) website and you instantly know this supplier has an extra edge. The friendly, charming retro design is refreshingly fun and inviting. One pull-down menu shows the company's cartoon character beaver mascot instructing visitors to "Hop on the Busy Beaver Bandwagon!" When you click on the 'Contact' link, the beaver appears again to say: "We're here for You! Let's talk. Give us a ring. Shoot us an email, or drop on by for a visit."



Busy Beaver Buttons Company owner Christen Carter poses in front of some buttons on display in the world's only button museum housed in the company's headquarters.

Who wouldn't want to take them up on their offer? It's easy to imagine that stepping into their headquarters in Chicago's Logan Square would be like stopping by an old friend's house.

Christen Carter, the woman who created this cheery company, found her calling while on a work-study semester in London while earning her comparative literature and film degree. "Buttons hadn't been popular in the U.S. since I was a kid, but I noticed they were still a thing with my friends in London," says Carter. "They never really went away."

Carter returned to Indiana University in Bloomington after the semester was over and resumed classes, with the idea of starting her own button company. "My friend, Mark Pawson, an artist who's been making buttons for a long time, offered to show me how to get started." When one organization she contacted said that if she started a button company, they would order from her, she was off and running. She started the

company in 1995, the same year she graduated from college.

She contacted an artist whose work she admired, Archer Prewitt, and said, "Hey, I'm starting this button company. Would you be interested in drawing a character for it?" He ended up drawing the company's logo in exchange for 300 buttons and still occasionally contributes designs.

The name of the company evolved over its first year in business. "The original name of the company was The Little One-Inch Button Company, but in 1996 I renamed it Busy Beaver Buttons because I knew I wanted to do more than just one-inch buttons at some point," Carter says. "The name came from an old children's book my mom had, called *Busy Beavers*, which was about these very industrious beavers. Plus, I thought it was funny."

From the beginning, the company has always had a commitment to U.S.-made products and to the environment. "It's important for the whole country's economy," Carter says. "All of our supplies are made in the USA [the company uses steel from Gary, Indiana, machinery and paper from Wisconsin, and paper from French Paper Company in Niles, Michigan] which makes it easier when dealing with issues or short turnaround. We want the control to make quality products as quickly as our customer needs them and our local suppliers help us do that."

One of the company's core





One of the company's core values is Give A Dam (notice the beaver pun). To Carter, it means "we care a lot about our customers, but it extends to caring about the environment. I've always thought you should leave the planet better than you found it."

values is Give A Dam (notice the beaver pun). To Carter, it means "we care a lot about our customers, but it extends to caring about the environment. I've always thought you should leave the planet better than you found it—I'd like the world to be around for a long time so we can continue making buttons! Also, it's an industry to help move along and create more and more jobs for our country."

When the company outgrew its 1,400 square-foot space and purchased a larger space nearby with twice the amount of square footage, Carter made sure all the renovations were eco-friendly, even when they ended up costing more than she planned. "We had budgeted \$80,000 to install geothermal heating and cooling again (our previous building has it), but it ended up being around \$130,000. So we didn't stay in budget, but geothermal is a long-term investment," Carter explains.

On the other hand, using reclaimed materials saved money during the renovation process. "We like the looks of the old stuff better, like our slop sink [a deep sink designed for messy tasks] and interior windows, which are beautiful old windows from a Tudor mansion that were only \$35 apiece from an architectural salvage place. If we bought them new, they wouldn't have had the character we wanted, or they would have been way more expensive," she adds.

The space is large enough to house the company's button museum—the world's only tribute to buttons—which features buttons dating back to 1896, and is free and open to the public. "We created the Button Museum to show how people commemorated noteworthy



The newly renovated Busy Beaver Button Company headquarters in Chicago.

times in their lives by creating and collecting these wearable mementos," Carter states on the museum's website.

Carter, who now co-owns the company and the museum along with her brother, Joel, is proud that the company has grown every year since it began (it's now a 25-person operation making more than 3.5 million buttons per year), and she is optimistic about the future. "The 2018 elections aren't far away, meaning candidates will be ordering lots of buttons," Carter says. "Usually midterm elections aren't too busy, but we expect an uptick. We are also working on creating new, innovative button packaging options." Besides buttons, the company makes promotional magnets, mirrors and bottle openers.

Looking back on her nearly 22 years in the button business, Carter says she's proudest of "... setting up a business that attracts such amazing people. I'm so proud to work with all these great people, both customers and coworkers." **PPB**

Julie Richie is a former associate editor for PPB.

Going Green

Christen Carter's Tips For Becoming A More Environmentally Conscious Company

- Ask your suppliers what they do to reduce waste. If you would like them to do more, suggest that it's important to you.
- When renovating, use reclaimed materials. They can often be less expensive, and it saves the items from the landfill.
- Research green building materials. For example, certain types of insulation not only perform better but also can save materials from landfills. The U.S. Green Building Council at www.usgbc.org is a good place to start.
- See alternative power as a long-term investment. Things can be more expensive on the front end, like solar power and geothermal heating and cooling, but it does pay off. Check on state and federal tax incentives too.

MILLENNIAL



A Look At How
Promotional Products
Measure Up To
Millennial Expectations



SPOTLIGHT

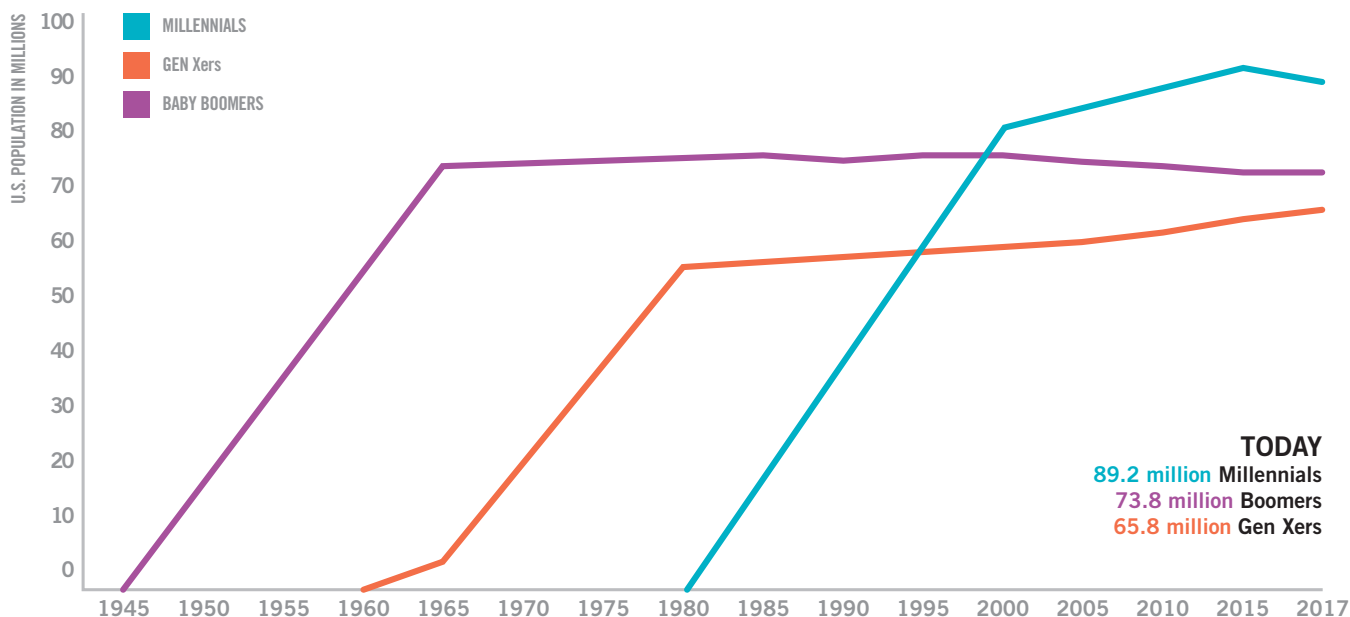
Connecting With The Most Powerful Consumer Generation

by Moumita Das

The health of the American economy rests in the hands of consumers in their prime spending years. Their attitudes, behaviors and spending habits are reflective of their formative years, and are shaped by the political, economic and social climate of that time period. For marketers, Millennials are the most important generation to come along in the past 100 years—perhaps ever. The oldest Millennials are reaching the age of 35 and beginning to make life-changing purchases. As this generation of consumers moves into its prime spending years, Millennials will continue to disrupt how the world communicates as they drive large-scale changes in the marketplace.



A Generational Snapshot



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Today, the Millennial generation is the largest consumer group in U.S. history, and it continues to grow in size because of the increase in immigration.

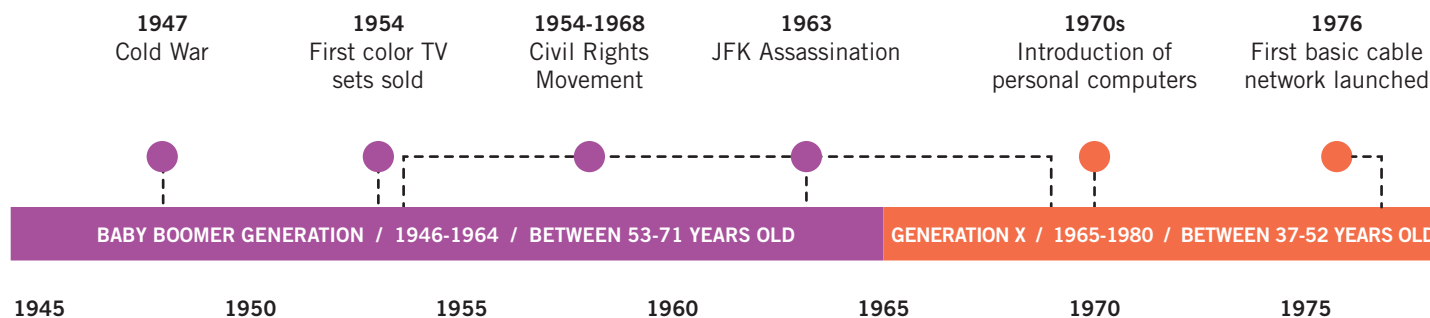
The Changing Consumer Landscape

Occasionally referred to as 'Echo Boomers,' Millennials seek to echo the behavior of the Boomer generation; however, many feel they don't yet have the means to follow their parents'

behavior. Millennials have grown up in a time of rapid change, giving them a set of priorities and expectations sharply different from previous generations. Their coming of age is marked by an era of demographic transformation, technological breakthroughs and economic upheaval that is influencing how they live and what they value. And for marketers, understanding what those values look like is essential to envisioning what the future of consumerism may be.

Today, the Millennial generation is the largest consumer group in U.S. history, and it continues to grow in size because of the increase in immigration.

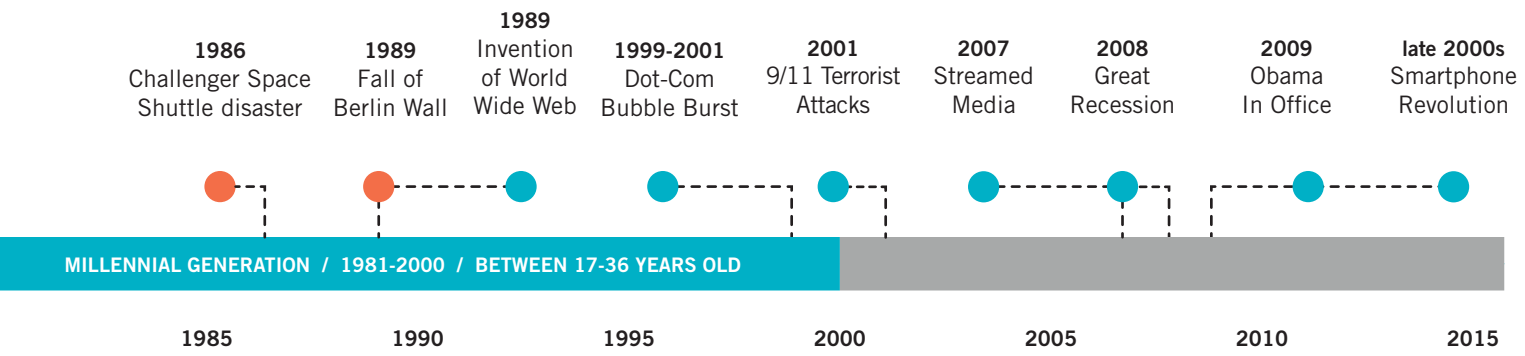
The Changing Consumer Landscape



The Changing Consumer Perspective



Source: "How Millennials Want To Work And Live" Gallup (2016)



So, What Does The Modern Millennial Look Like?



They Are Connected Millennials Have Information At Their Fingertips.

Smartphone ownership is highest among Millennials ages 18-24, 98 percent of whom own smartphones. Millennials ages 25-34 are right on their heels with a 97-percent ownership rate. Americans seem to be merging many of the things they once did on task-specific devices into their smartphones, and ditching the other devices. This can lead to one thing: dependence on smartphones for online access. Millennials' affinity for technology is reshaping consumerism as we know it. With instant access to product information and reviews, Millennials are turning to brands that offer the most relevant information at a maximum convenience.

Source: The Nielsen Company (November 2016)



They Are Smart Millennials Are The Most Educated Generation To Date.

More than 63 percent of Millennials have a bachelor's degree. Why is this so important? Because educational attainment is highly correlated to economic success. Not to mention, consumer spending accounts for 70 percent of the economy; the higher earnings for many college graduates allow higher spending, and in turn, economic growth.

Source: Pew Research Center (March 2015)



They Are Diverse

The Millennial generation is the most diverse generation the U.S. has ever seen, second only to Generation Z, whose members have not yet entered the workforce. In 2014, the U.S. Census Bureau reported Millennials in minority ethnic groups reaching 50.2 percent, becoming the majority for the first time in history. This culturally diverse upbringing has played a big role in making Millennials significantly more comfortable talking about diversity and inclusion than older generations. Millennials see diversity as the blending of different backgrounds, experiences and perspectives, and believe emphasizing their differences helps them bring value to the workplace. In fact, almost one in two Millennials reported not pursuing an employer that doesn't maintain or encourage a diverse and inclusive working environment.

Source: "Millennials At Work," Institute for Public Relations (December 2016)





They Move Up Or They Will Move Out

Millennials are not willing to stick around if they do not believe they can grow, even if it means growing out of a company. They change jobs more often than any generation in history—and that's not necessarily a bad thing. Flexibility is one of their calling cards, an attribute that makes it possible to change job titles, organizations or even careers on the fly. The average tenure of a Millennial employee is two years. In comparison, the average tenure for Gen X employees is five years, and seven years for Baby Boomers.

Source: "How Millennials Want To Work And Live," Gallup (2016)



They Are A Powerful Force

Millennials Comprise The Largest Generation In The Workforce.

More than one in three American professionals are Millennials, comprising the largest share of the U.S. workforce. With more than half still in an age of transition from college to the working world, the Millennial generation's presence in the workforce is likely to continue to grow year after year. In fact, Millennials are projected to account for 70 percent of the workforce by 2025.

Due to rapid Baby Boomer retirement, Millennials will be given high levels of responsibility earlier in their careers than previous generations.

Source: Pew Research Center, May 2015



They Are The Worst Paid

As the most educated group to have entered the workforce, Millennials should, in theory, be the highest-paid cohort of young adults in American history. Surprisingly, that's not the case. The U.S. economy has been recovering at a slow pace since 2008—the first full year of the Great Recession. Due to this and staggering amounts of student debt, Millennials have been reluctant to mirror their parents' spending behaviors. Instead, they're turning to a new set of services that provide access to products without the burdens of ownership, steering the emergence of a sharing economy.

Source: Goldman Sachs Global Investment Research

"25 years from now, car sharing will be the norm, and car ownership an anomaly."

— Jeremy Rifkin, author and economist

PPPB's December 2016 cover story previewed findings from PPAI's 2017 *Consumer Study* highlighting five key performance metrics called the "5 Rs of Promotional Products." These metrics were designed to measure the role of promotional products as an advertising channel by evaluating the brand impact of reach, recall, resonance, reaction and relativity across demographic segments. On these pages, we take a more in-depth look at the study results to see how promotional products really measure up to the Millennial consumer—the largest purchasing generation today.

REACH

Promotional Products Reach Millennials

Consumers these days are overloaded and overwhelmed with information. As statistician Nate Silver put it, “Every day, three times per second, we produce the equivalent amount of data that the Library of Congress has in its entire print collection.” Brands, more than ever, are faced with the challenge of cutting through the clutter and effectively engaging with their target audience. Promotional products not only reach their intended audience, but provide opportunities to heighten brand exposure with increased ad frequency, length and limits.

PPAI study findings reveal that 100 percent of Millennial respondents have received a promotional product in their lifetime. In fact, nearly one third reported receiving between three to five promotional products in the past six months. With every Millennial owning a promotional product, brands now have a new, promising channel to drive their message and reach this powerful consumer generation.

In advertising, the term “effective frequency” is used to describe the number of times a consumer must be exposed to branding or an advertising message before the marketer gets the desired response. “Effective frequency might mean that a single advertising exposure is able to influence the purchase of a brand,” notes John Philip Jones, an American

advertising professor and author. “But the phrase was really coined to communicate the idea that there must be enough concentration of media weight to cross a certain threshold—that there has to be enough of it before the consumer buys a product to influence their choice.” One thing stands true: messages are more effective when repeated, and every day, the average Millennial is in contact with a promotional product at all times.

Promotional products
allow brands to
engage Millennials
at all times
EVERY SINGLE DAY.

While other advertising channels simply communicate a message or reinforce branding, promotional products also play a functional role within the consumer lifestyle. Promotional products allow brands to directly affect Millennials’ daily lives and maximize reach by innately integrating into their everyday routines. The average Millennial is most likely to walk around with a promotional product everywhere they go, subsequently expanding a brand’s reach to anyone who comes in contact while the product is exposed. Two in three Millennials wear or carry a promotional product day-to-day. Millennial men are more likely to store

promotional products in their vehicle or bedroom, while women are more apt to keep items in the kitchen or bathroom.

 **8 in 10** RE-GIFT

 **1 in 3** DONATE

Advertising that gets shared by the intended recipient magnifies the brand’s reach and exposure in a single campaign. Millennials are more likely to pass along a promotional product than any other generation. In fact, eight in 10 will give the item to someone they know, and one in three will donate a promotional product after it’s used.

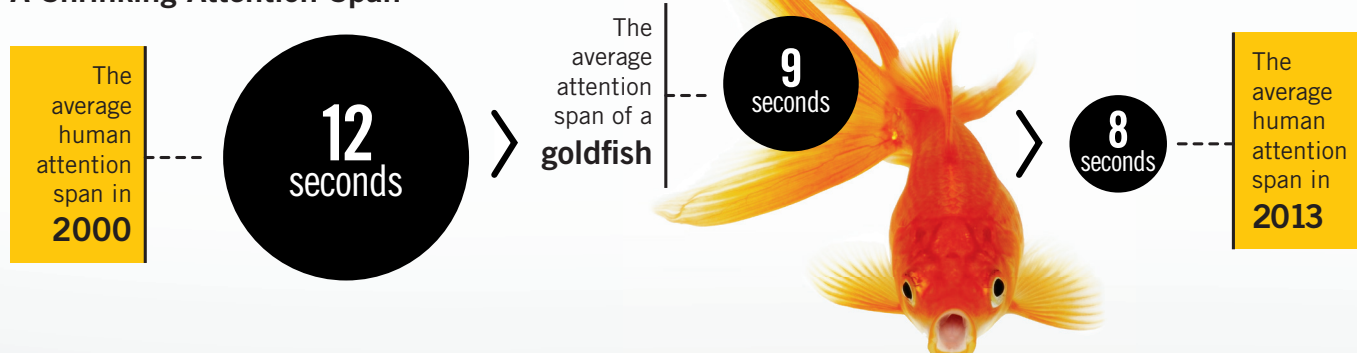
RECALL

Promotional Products Are Built To Stick

A Shrinking Attention Span

Once you reach your target audience, it’s important to be remembered, because being remembered helps build consumer awareness, which is the basis for any relationship with the brand. It is also a necessary step in the complete customer journey—the foundation upon which purchasing lies. With the average human

A Shrinking Attention Span



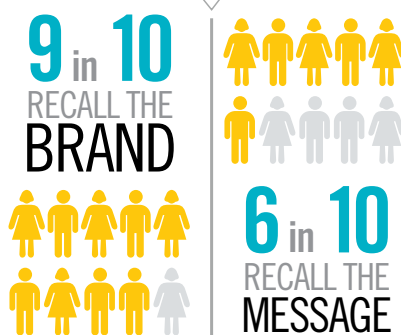
attention span shrinking 33 percent in a little over 10 years, the market for consumer attention has become increasingly competitive, and experts anticipate it only to get worse. Marketers often find themselves chasing the “right moments” to best influence the consumer path to purchase, making brand recall the fuel to success.

Millennials expect to be engaged. As a generation native to an era marked by rapid transformation and in turn, an increased number of advertising touchpoints, they are well acquainted with the ad game. Gallup recently reported that one in four Millennials is fully engaged, either emotionally or psychologically, to a brand, marking the lowest consumer engagement level over previous generations. This inevitably requires more mechanical advertising to be delivered at the right moments and shifts brand strategy to rely on environmental receptivity, driving automatic impressions that ultimately stick. Promotional products are built to do just that.

8 in 10
MILLENNIALS KEEP
PROMOTIONAL
PRODUCTS >1 YR



The longer a promotional product is kept by a consumer, the more opportunity a brand has to seamlessly become a part of day-to-day behaviors and gain the user's familiarity over time. Study findings reveal about eight in 10 Millennials will keep a promotional product longer than one year; the majority keep it upwards of five years. A surprising 13 percent reported owning a promotional product for more than 11 years—for some that's nearly half their lifetime.



The Millennial Memory

Because of their extended shelf life and their ability to be used in people's everyday routines, promotional products allow consumers an opportunity to absorb the content at the pace and in the amount of time they choose to consume the message. This presents a greater opportunity for brands to have a distraction-free engagement with Millennials and gain higher brand recall. It's no surprise that 87 percent of Millennials remember the brand and 58 percent remember the message from a promotional product they have received.

RESONANCE

Promotional Products Resonate

While it's important to be remembered, it is also important to resonate with your target audience. Advertising that creates favorable impressions helps consumers connect with the brand on a personal level and creates the necessary foundation for a lasting relationship.

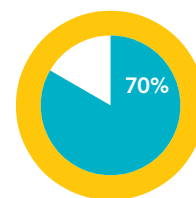
1%
said a compelling
advertisement would
make them trust a
brand more.

The Millennial Perspective

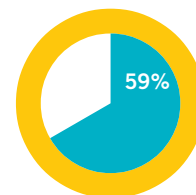
It's no secret that Millennials are opposed to traditional forms of advertising and

openly reject them. A recent Facebook study reported a 25-percent decrease in Millennial users in 2014—revealing unwanted tracking and advertisements as the root cause. In fact, according to a study conducted by Elite Daily, a popular digital news platform for Millennials, only one percent of Millennials said a compelling advertisement would make them trust a brand more. So, what does it take for a brand to connect with a Millennial consumer?

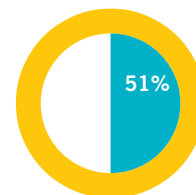
Advertising Qualities Important to Millennials



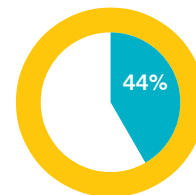
Visually Appealing



Clear & Concise



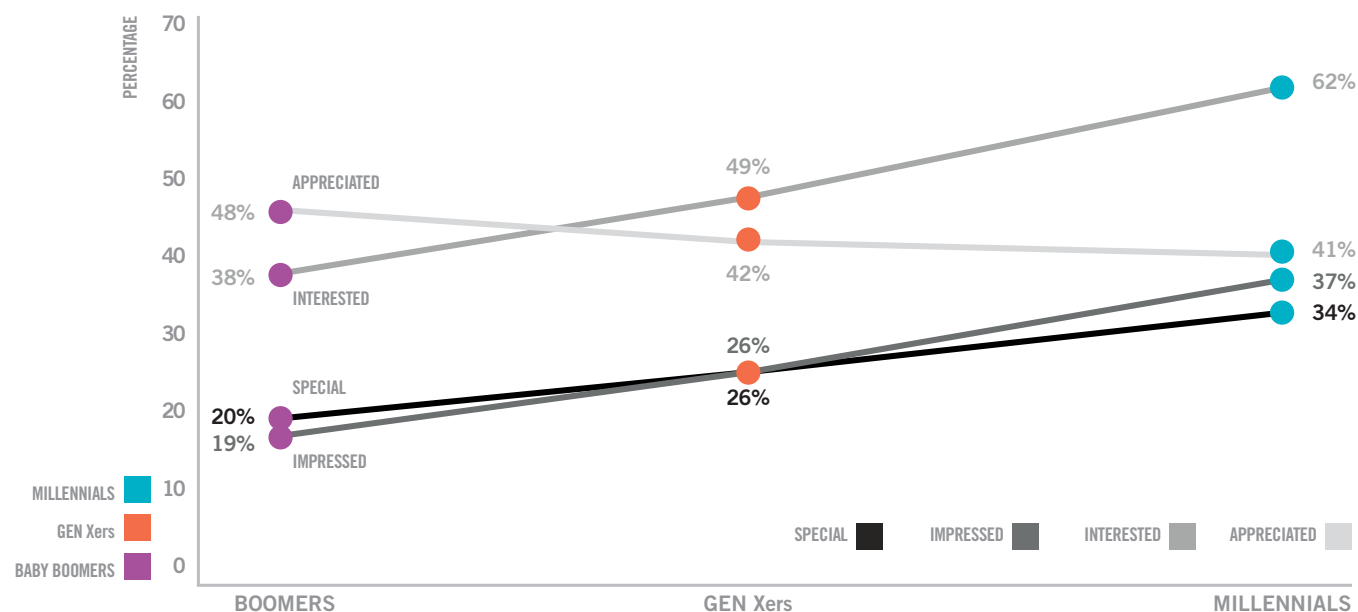
Thought Provoking



Personally Relatable

Brand advertising has traditionally been concerned with touching the hearts of audiences to bond consumers to the brands they grew to love. Successful

Emotional Response To Promotional Products



advertising that resonates with consumers prompts emotions to steer them back to the brand. But today's consumers have more options than ever. They don't just consume; they create their own content and curate that of others. There is no longer one large platform holding the majority of consumer influence, and traditional marketing methods are becoming less and less effective. We are now faced with a consumer group seeking to enrich themselves and explore their interests so they can build and pursue their purpose. Millennials will respond to content that resonates with them; something that will catch their eye, clearly delivering the message.

Actively engaging Millennial consumers and influencing their thoughts can be a daunting task; however, promotional products provide an opportunity to make it easier for the brand-consumer relationship to grow even stronger. Not only do Millennials like receiving them, but promotional products are making them feel more than appreciated; they make them feel special and impressed, and they are sparking their curiosities to learn more

about the brand. These key emotions guide consumer perception of a brand. In fact, 88 percent of Millennials have a more favorable impression of the brand as a result of receiving a promotional product.

88%
have a more favorable
impression of the
brand after receiving a
promotional product.

REACTION

Promotional Products Reap The Greatest Return

Advertising channels are the most important tools used by brands to reach a targeted audience and ensure that their message resonates positively so that it ultimately generates the desired reaction: the consumer becomes their customer. Millennials choose brands that

engage them based on their passions and interests more often than they choose those that simply urge them to buy the product being advertised. As a result, their path to purchase is actually their path to purpose, ultimately generating a greater return on a given investment. Consumers driven by purpose are more likely to repeat a purchase than those influenced by hearing one convincing message.

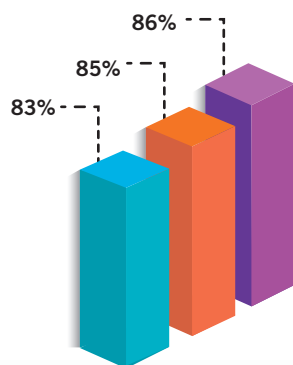
For years, the usefulness of a promotional product served as the leading feature and benefit of promotional products. Though that has not changed within the Millennial rationale, the study found other qualities that have emerged and shifted the value consumers place on promotional products. Millennials keep promotional products because they are designed to fit their style and communicate a message with which they are familiar.

The functionality of promotional products adds purpose and appeal to the interests of the most connected generation in history. With most Millennials willing to spend a little more on a product they believe in, this finding is particularly

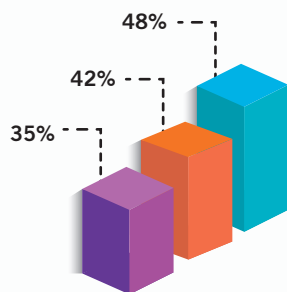
important. Having a treasure trove of information at their fingertips, brands now have the ability to engage deeper and build consumer trust. Branded promotional products have a limit on the amount of content they can share—and this can be their appeal as it allows brands to spark curiosity and drive consumers to learn more. Not surprisingly, after receiving a promotional product, 87 percent of Millennials said they looked up the brand.

Reasons Consumers Keep Promotional Products

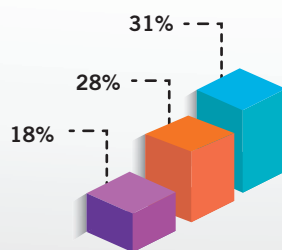
PRACTICAL PRODUCT FUNCTION



FIT MY STYLE AND/OR PERSONALITY



PERSONALLY RELATABLE MESSAGE



MILLENNIALS GEN Xers BABY BOOMERS

87% RESEARCH THE BRAND

Successful advertising prompts reaction leading to an added value for consumers. Value builds trust, and trust builds a loyal following for the brand. Millennials find more value in promotional products over the other generations and 31 percent claim promotional products would *definitely* alter their path to a continuous purchase.

Would a promotional product increase your loyalty to the brand?

PERCENT INDICATING DEFINITELY YES

15%

21%

31%

MILLENNIALS GEN Xers BABY BOOMERS

RELATIVITY

Promotional Products Are The Most Highly Regarded Form Of Advertising

Advertising has experienced some major milestones in its history. With the emergence of the printing press in the 1440s, television in the 1940s and the latest advancements in technology, brands have been presented with an endless stream of opportunities to deliver their message. Today, successful brand strategy relies deeply on ad-relativity insights when weighing where to invest advertising dollars to best engage Millennial consumers. So how do promotional products compare?

Millennials ranked promotional products the most effective advertising channel—higher than broadcast, online, mobile and print—to provide an incentive to take action. And that's not all. Online news platform Elite Daily reports that 88 percent of Millennials said they are more likely to do business with a brand as a result of receiving a promotional product, compared to 62 percent who said brand engagement via social media will likely lead to them becoming loyal customers.

62%
SOCIAL
MEDIA

88%
PROMOTIONAL
PRODUCTS





The Time Is Now To Connect With This Generation

It is evident from this research that the promotional products industry must commit itself to connecting with and engaging an entirely new consumer market. Millennials have already begun to challenge the way we do business and have even helped create new methods of market saturation. This will inevitably continue as the Millennial buying community increases in size. We know that promotional products work, we know we love what we do, and now we know that Millennials love and appreciate our products. Now, we must connect all the pieces to generate effective communication with younger consumers. PPAI is continuing to demonstrate how we as an industry are perceived by Millennials. Your Association understands that the present shift in the demographics is a significant contributor to the challenges faced our businesses, and we will make sure these changes affect each of us positively.

If you have seen any of my presentations about Millennials and the changing market, you know I say that 'business as usual' is anything but that because of this new generation. But, no matter the buyer, we are still in the same business of connecting people to products that deliver a message and tell a story. Our access to the young consumer market is going to look different than to any other buyer, but these consumers have not written off the promotional products industry, as findings from PPAI's 2017 Consumer Study shows. We will not only succeed with these new buyers, we will thrive.

To do this, I encourage you to think of our industry as more than products. You are marketing and advertising professionals who develop long-term relationships to deliver effective, time-tested storytelling. Your vehicle to achieve this success just happens to be promotional products. Millennials will buy from you, but you must take the first step. I encourage you to look more at the information and resources available through PPAI's generational diversity program (see below) and to use PPAI's research to have conversations with your peers, colleagues and customers about the continued effectiveness of promotional products.

—Seth Barnett, PPAI Diversity Development & Engagement Manager

Join The Conversation

To learn more about generational selling, diversity development or the Millennial market, visit: www.ppai.org/advocacy/diversity-engagement or join the conversation on social media using: [#ppaiNextGen](https://twitter.com/ppaiNextGen)

Most Effective Advertising Channels For Millennials



PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS
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Incentives, Awards



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Product Placement



ONLINE ADVERTISING
Internet, Email,
Social Media



MOBILE MARKETING
Messaging,
Applications



PRINT ADS
Magazines, Newspapers,
Direct Mail

Conclusion

Millennials are hungry to live out their passions, and the brands that can satisfy their appetites will reap the reward for years to come. Promotional products provide the best anchor to leverage brand reach, drive recall and fiercely resonate to engage the best reaction among Millennial consumers relative to any other advertising channel. **PPB**

Moumita Das is market research coordinator at PPAI.

For more exclusive PPAI Research and the complete detailed report on this study, visit www.ppai.org/members/research.



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VANTAGE



GREG NORMAN

PPAI Educates

Students learn about industry careers at AMA Collegiate Conference

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KRISTINA
FREDERICKS, MAS,
MODERNE
GLASS CO.

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BRYAN JAMES

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110 NEW MEMBERS

PPAI President and CEO Paul Bellantone, CAE, moderates a panel discussion with Larry and Elizabeth Manshel from distributor ITC.4 at the AMA Collegiate Conference.



Inside PPAI
WLC's Speaker
Lineup Opens The
Door To Inspiration
and Learning
page 101.

A Glass Overflowing

For Kristina Fredericks, MAS, her coworkers at Moderne Glass Co. are just like family.

by Jen Alexander

As if an immediate family of 23 weren't enough, Kristina Fredericks, MAS, has also added an adoptive family at Moderne Glass Co., in Aliquippa, Pennsylvania. The supplier has been her promotional products home since 1988, and she holds her co-workers as dear as she does her parents, husband, son, three siblings and numerous nieces and nephews.

"When I am not traveling or working, I look forward to spending time with my family," says Fredericks. "My parents just celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary, and family is everything to me. Once a month, we plan a special get-together at my parents' farm. It's always a great day of eating, fun, shenanigans, and most importantly, no cell phones!"

While Fredericks's history with Moderne Glass doesn't go quite as far back, she has grown up professionally at the supplier, alongside many of her peers. "While attending a Kent State [University] job fair in 1988, I met a representative from Moderne Glass," she says. "They hired me as a customer service representative and promoted me to the customer service manager within a year."

Fredericks lives close to the factory, just 10 minutes from Pittsburgh International Airport, and she also makes regular trips to the family farm in Ohio, where her five-year-old son Max has his very own pony. "My parents have



Kristina Fredericks, MAS, gets up close and personal with a new pig pal.

horses; I grew up riding horses every day and have always had a tremendous love for animals," says Fredericks.

Read on to learn more about a day in Fredericks's life at Moderne Glass Co.

How long have you served as senior VP of sales and marketing?

My focus for the majority of my career at Moderne Glass was in recruitment, training and management of sales and service. I have an MBA in marketing and management, so I spent a lot of time with our marketing department helping with catalog and literature development. When the position of VP of sales and marketing became available in 2009, it was a natural transition.

How does this job challenge you?

Every day is different so it keeps us all on our toes. As a supplier, we are often faced with "needed it yesterday," and of course our goal is to always accommodate. We have an amazing operations team, so they always do their best to make things happen.

What changes or improvements have you recently implemented, or are you planning to make in the future?

Moderne introduced a new website at the beginning of the year with features such as advanced product search, mobile friendly, improved virtual proofs and the ability to "save as" projects for presentations, online

ordering, plus much more.

From a sales perspective, I am especially excited about the "My Projects" feature and how it can be utilized to help grow sales and collaborate more effectively.

What do you love about your company?

The people are what I love most about Moderne. We have a lot of longevity, so there are people I have worked with for almost 30 years.

Describe your office atmosphere.

Our office atmosphere is fun and playful, but hard-working. Although we all carry a heavy workload, we always take the time to celebrate birthdays, holidays and special events in each other's lives. We always give back and support several organizations such as the American Cancer Society, Wounded Warriors, Humane Society, Education Partnership, and the Salvation Army (Treasures for Children).

What kinds of projects or tasks might you tackle on a given day?

Every day is different. Some weeks I am in the office and other weeks I am on the road, attending trade shows and other industry events. When I am in the office, I work with my sales administrator and marketing director setting up online and co-op programs for customers, in addition to handling large-quantity quote opportunities and customer projects.

How do you collaborate with co-workers?

Every morning, managers from all departments meet to

review and discuss prior-day inbound orders and production schedules for the upcoming month. This allows us to not only discuss and prepare for normal production, but also to review and schedule more complicated or time-consuming orders. Because we have managers from all departments present, we also open the floor for each manager to speak to the rest of the group about any pending matters relevant to our company as a whole.

What makes your company a valuable member of the promotional products community?

Next year, Moderne will celebrate its 50th anniversary. Many of the big players that sold drinkware when I started almost 30 years ago, like Houze Glass and Victor Marsh/Galaxy, are no longer in business. We have stood the test of time, and some of our more profound achievements include:

- Developing and patenting exclusive, award-winning glass designs with two of the largest glass producers in the world, Libbey Glass and ARC International;
- Collaborating with the FDA to reconsider and ultimately reverse regulations that inhibited drinkware suppliers' ability to continue to offer and decorate staple drinkware items offered in the promotional products industry;
- Pioneering many decorating techniques that have since been adopted by the industry. **PPB**

Strategy For Success



Kelly and Bryan James attended their first PPAI Expo in January.

Corporate Specialty Insignia's Bryan James credits an unexpected mentor for helping him realize the value he brings to clients.

by Julie Richie

Bryan James, co-owner of distributor Corporate Specialty Insignia (PPAI 671332) with his wife, Kelly, started his career in 1989 with high-end retail jeweler Bailey, Banks & Biddle, where he was a general manager. A large part of his business focused on selling C-suite level premium gifts, including brands such as Rolex and Waterford. But a meeting he landed with Atlanta businessman Gregory Baranco changed the course of his career.

James first became familiar with Baranco, an auto dealership owner, when he read an article about him in *Black Enterprise* magazine in the mid-1980s

while a student at the University of Southwestern Louisiana. "I remember he was on the cover standing with his hands in the air in front of his Atlanta dealership," says James. "So when I moved [to Atlanta] in 1989, I knew he was here. The article had mentioned that Atlanta was an incubator for entrepreneurs and I was inspired [by Baranco]."

While working at Bailey, Banks & Biddle, James took a chance and reached out to Baranco. "I approached him requesting an appointment, with the pitch that I could help him solve problems in recognizing and retaining talent," says James. "Some say to never meet your idol because

you might be disappointed. That could have happened. The guy could have denied me. That happens every day in the sales experience."

But Baranco didn't disappoint James. During their meeting, he encouraged James to branch out on his own. "He showed me the value I bring to the market in my understanding of the value of recognition and creating a meaningful moment, of making the intangible tangible. I left his office inspired and about two months later I was resigning from my job," says James. "Here we are 23 years later and I'm still in touch with him."

Just as Baranco did for

“Today the combined competitive nature of the market, robust internet product options and the generational gap of Millennial end buyers make for a more difficult opportunity to earn new business.”



James volunteers weekly at the Ronald McDonald House.

him, James makes a point of giving back to the community by mentoring others, and he supports educational organizations through fundraising and in-kind donations. There's an entire page on the Corporate Specialty Insignia website showcasing the company's commitment to various educational causes. “We consistently raise over \$150,000 per year to benefit teaching and learning,” James says. “[Kelly and I] are committed to the principle of Conscious Capitalism, which we pursue using our 3T strategy: our time, our treasure and our talent.”

How has your company evolved to the full-service marketing solutions organization it is today?

Over the past 23 years in business, we have observed the trade evolve from tactical to strategic as end buyers are demanding higher standards of performance. Two decades ago, products, trends and innovation led the sales-call process. Decisions were more focused and interested in the

gadget, utility and perceived value or presentation of products. Additionally, catalogs were hugely important in product selections. In-office visits were the standard of practice in developing relationships.

Today the combined competitive nature of the market, robust internet product options and the generational gap of Millennial end buyers make for a more difficult opportunity to earn new business. Our solution to this dynamic is to first focus on value, then solve problems, and lastly provide sustainable and scalable solutions.

You went to your first PPAI Expo this year. How was your experience?

We were amazed at the many new products and innovations. However, our intent was to engage in conversations around case studies and application of success. For example, on our final day canvassing the trade-show floor, we crossed paths with Steve [Levinson], the owner of Water Promotions. In that conversation, we shared a strategy that we practiced last year: introducing edibles in as many conversations as possible. This practice increased sales that had not existed previously. Immediately upon our return to Georgia, we introduced water into conversations, which yielded an immediate sizable order. We are encouraged by our first attendance to The PPAI Expo. We believe that collaborations of SAGE technology, PPAI education, suppliers and decorators with

[distributor] consultants will offer great opportunities for meaningful, purposeful and intentional programs.

How do you approach earning new business?

Our approach to earning new opportunities is a discovery process. As a practice, our team visits potential clients with a sample case of successful projects explaining the application and measurement of each sample's program. Using this strategy, the product becomes part of the concept; it is not a product-selling experience. Second, we spend more time listening and asking questions about barriers, budgets, vision, objective, history, and measurement and forecast outcomes. But we also focus on developing the customer base we already have by asking existing clients, “What are some of the barriers in your business? What can you improve on in your business? What metric would you like to impact in your business?” When I have the answers to those questions, I can start imagining a solution to the problem.

Your business card showing a five-step diagram to planning branding solutions is a unique marketing tool. How did you come up with the concept?

Last year, we were invited to participate in a vendor exhibit with not much time to prepare. I brainstormed strategies to tell our why and how. We do find clients studying the card so that is encouraging. We are also using

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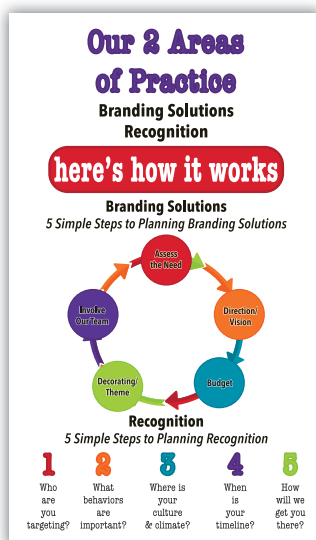


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The flip side of James's business card gives a quick lesson on branding.

"I don't think there's a playbook out yet. But I think one of the most important keys to a successful working relationship as a couple is patience."



this on self-promo journals, which offer utility. We are seeing results from this strategy. Stay tuned for our next version, which we are currently drafting.

What advice do you have for new industry distributors?

The best advice I would share with new consultants is to read industry news, notice every business practice outside your domain and observe others' strategies to repurpose those best practices in your business. Practices are usually transferable from industry to industry. The key to a sustainable and profitable business is also to change behaviors.

What are some keys to working together effectively with your spouse?

I'm confident most husband-and-wife teams would agree [talking about the business] is only secondary to [talking about] family. It's extremely difficult

not to talk about business 24/7. It's always in the moment as to how you navigate [working together]. I don't think there's a playbook out yet. But I think one of the most important keys to a successful working relationship as a couple is patience. Decorum in difficult moments of the day is critical, otherwise it can be rather challenging to overcome hard feelings that evening. Another important key is the transfer of knowledge, as this impacts the sustainability of the business in the event of unforeseen circumstances. Also critical is to develop business processes which all follow. **PPB**

Julie Richie is associate editor for PPB.

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compiled by James Khattak

See who has moved in—and up—in the promotional world



Dan Livengood, CAS



David Watkins



Jonathan Riegel, MAS



Mike Ruben



Laurie Gerber



Mark Charbonneau

DISTRIBUTORS

20/20 Brand Solutions (PPAI 104295)—Dan Livengood, CAS, vice president of marketing and business development

eCompanyStore (PPAI 158356)—John Cheevers, director of strategic partnerships

Elevate Brand Marketing (PPAI 409232)—David Watkins, director of business development

BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS

The Premier Group Network—Jonathan Riegel, MAS, executive director

The PSI Show—Petra Lassahn, promoted to director

SUPPLIERS

Aunt Beth's Cookie Keepers and Bamboo Studio (PPAI 230578)—Eric Cox, national sales manager

The Book Company (PPAI 218850)—Mike Valentini, Sr, CAS; Mike Valentini, Jr.; Jean Carboni and John Ragozzine of Mike Valentini Promotions (PPAI 529752) to represent the company in the Northeast: Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont and Virginia, as well as Washington, D.C.



Ray Jimenez



Patrick Doczi



Jennifer Gambrell



Megan Zezzo



Ken Tymula



Christian Brandt



GOT NEWS?

We'll share it. Send your people news, including high-resolution images, to **PPB** News Editor James Khattak at JamesK@ppai.org

Charles River Apparel (PPAI 111644)—**John Rodriguez**, to represent the company in Colorado, Utah and New Mexico

IMAGEN Brands, parent company of suppliers Crown Products (PPAI 113430) and Vitronic (PPAI 114197)—**Mike Rubin**, district sales manager, covering the Northeast and Midwest regions

Kati Sportcap & Bag (PPAI 113758)—**Laurie Gerber**, product educator/outside sales representative

The Magnet Group (PPAI 338534)—**Mark Charbonneau**, regional sales manager for Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island and Vermont, and **Ray Jimenez**, regional sales manager for Southern California, Arizona and Nevada

National Gift Card (PPAI 433817)—**Patrick Doczi**, promoted to director of North American operations

Pro Towels (PPAI 112755)—**Jennifer Gambrell**, senior director of marketing

S&S Activewear (PPAI 256121)—**Megan Zezzo**, national account representative

Sonoma Promotional Solutions (PPAI 204856)—**Ken Tymula**, sales manager, Eastern region

Vantage Apparel (PPAI 113235)—**Christian Brandt**, Northeast sales manager

IN MEMORIAM / Michael Toney

Michael Byron Toney, a former regional sales manager for Midlothian, Texas-based supplier Ennis, Inc. (PPAI 280026), passed away on February 19 in Fullerton, California. He was 67.

Toney, a graduate of Ohio University, spent more than 30 years in the print business, first with Datagraphics and later with Printegra, which Ennis acquired in 2012. He remained with Ennis until this past November.

"Michael was the type of salesperson who would go out of his way to help all of his customers, who to him were really his friends,"

says Terry Pennington, Ennis vice president of sales. "The entire Ennis family extends their heartfelt condolences and sympathies to Michael's family, friends and coworkers."

Toney is survived by his mother, Anne Toney; wife, Dolores; son, Jonathan; daughter, Jennifer Beck and her husband, Luke; granddaughters, Kensington and Mackinleigh Beck; and numerous cousins, nieces and nephews.



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Datebook

compiled by James Khattak

The important events shaping the promotional industry.

MAY

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*Albuquerque, New Mexico,
and Denver, Colorado*
[www.ldkmarketing.com/
southern-showcase.htm](http://www.ldkmarketing.com/southern-showcase.htm)

May 4-5

PMANC Expo Showcase
Promotional Marketing Association
of Northern California
Monterey, California
www.pmanc.org

May 15

UMAPP Room Show
Upper Midwest Association of
Promotional Professionals
Bloomington, Minnesota
www.umapp.org

May 15-18

Promo Marketing Power Meeting
Promo Marketing
San Juan, Puerto Rico
www.pmpowermeetings.com

May 18

MIPPA Ideas In Bloom Show
Michigan Promotional
Professionals Association
Grand Rapids, Michigan
www.mippa.org

JUNE

June 1-3

The NBM Show
National Business Media
Indianapolis, Indiana
thenbmshow.com

June 7

SAAGNY Summer Showcase
Specialty Advertising Association
of Greater New York (SAAGNY)
New York, New York
www.saagny.org

June 26-28

Women's Leadership Conference
Promotional Products
Association International
Scottsdale, Arizona
www.ppai.org

June 28-30

Promo Marketing Power Meeting
Promo Marketing
Scottsdale, Arizona
www.pmpowermeetings.com

JULY

July 11-13

ASI Chicago
Advertising Specialty Institute
Chicago, Illinois
www.asicentral.com

July 20-22

The NBM Show
National Business Media
Long Beach, California
www.thenbmshow.com

June 12-14

Expo East
Promotional
Products
Association
International
*Atlantic City,
New Jersey*
www.ppai.org



August 13-15

PPAI North American
Leadership Conference
Promotional Products
Association International
Austin, Texas
www.ppai.org/events

August 15-17

Promo Marketing
Power Meeting
Promo Marketing
Austin, Texas
www.pmpowermeetings.com

August 16-17

PPAI Tech Summit
Promotional Products
Association International
Austin, Texas
www.ppai.org/events

**AUSTIN****PUT IT ON
THE SCHEDULE**

To scope out
other events, visit
www.ppai.org and
click on Events
and then on
Industry Calendar.

AUGUST**August 8-10**

PPAMS Road Show
Promotional Products
Association of the Mid-South
*Memphis, Nashville and
Chattanooga, Tennessee*
www.ppams.org

August 16-17

GCPPA Summer Showcase
Gold Coast Promotional
Products Association
Location TBD
www.gcppa.org

August 17

UMAPP Holiday Showcase
& End Buyer Expo
Upper Midwest Association of
Promotional Professionals
St. Paul, Minnesota
www.umapp.org

August 17-19

The NBM Show
National Business Media
Secaucus, New Jersey
www.thenbmshow.com

August 22-23

SAAC Show
Specialty Advertising
Association of California
Long Beach, California
www.saac.net

August 23

TRASA Fall Showcase
& Client Show
Three Rivers Advertising
Specialty Association
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
www.trasa.net

August 28-29

AzPPA Expo
Arizona Promotional
Products Association
Phoenix, Arizona
www.azppa.net

August 29

HPPA Hot Stuff Expo
Houston Promotional
Products Association
Houston, Texas
www.houstonppa.org

August 29-30

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Association of Florida
Orlando, Florida
www.pfaf.com

August 30-31

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WLC's Speaker Lineup Opens The Door To Inspiration And Learning

The 2017 Women's Leadership Conference (WLC) is coming to Scottsdale, Arizona, next month and bringing the top-notch education and networking opportunities attendees have come to expect. To be held June 26-28 at Scottsdale's Omni Scottsdale Resort & Spa at Montelucia, WLC will check all the boxes for those looking to hone their leadership skills, enhance their business proficiency, grow personally and professionally, and expand their networks with dozens of new business contacts.

After a welcome reception and the presentation of the 2017 Woman of Achievement award on June 26, WLC's schedule settles into two solid days of insightful speakers and panelists. Alongside numerous breakouts and roundtable discussions, the education schedule includes several eye-opening general sessions:

Sara Canaday of BST&C Ventures, LLC is WLC's opening general speaker. On June 27, Canaday, a leadership expert and career strategist, will share the secrets of developing a leadership presence that inspires confidence and connects with people in a way that makes them want to listen, support and follow.

The schedule continues with a panel discussion that presents real-life perspectives from local women leaders. Moderator Karie Cowden, president of distributor Connect The Dot Promotions, along with panelists Dr. Pamela Williamson of WBEC-West, Marlene Seitz with AIA/triARC Architecture & Design, LLC, and Microsoft Tempe's Cherryl

Pressley, will delve into the issues and challenges women face in today's workplace, and how they've seen the landscape change throughout their careers.

After lunch and before Tuesday afternoon's lineup of breakout sessions, Nicole Bandes, a productivity expert who works with small-business owners to find the time to do what matters most, is sharing the secret to mastering effective time management. Without it, Bandes says, not even the best schedule or smartest set of habits will save working professionals from being overwhelmed, overworked and exhausted.

Wednesday's opening education session focuses on breaking personal glass ceilings. Speaker and business coach Vanessa Shaw explores four unintentional habits that get in the way of success.

WLC's line up of general session speakers continues with Barefoot Brainstorming's Marilyn Barefoot, who shares her best practices for developing big ideas. She says big ideas can rally customers and employees to a brand and incite passion and results, but new ideas are necessary to energize and stimulate a brand.

Rita Davenport, CSP, CPAE, closes out the education schedule with an examination of failure as a learning process. Davenport, a speaker, author and television host, looks at how setbacks can pave the road to future successes.

For more on the WLC agenda and to register, visit www.ppai.org and click on Events.



Cherryl Pressley



Dr. Pamela Williamson



Karie Cowden



Marilyn Barefoot



Marlene Seitz



Nicole Bandes



Rita Davenport, CSP, CPAE



Sara Canaday



Vanessa Shaw



Strategist Crystal Washington will be bringing her insights on using technology for prospecting, gaining referrals and marketing to Expo East's Power Luncheon.

Expo East's Power Luncheon Explores The Future Of Social Media

Next month at Expo East, the Power Luncheon will introduce sales professionals to the future of social media. Aimed at industry members wanting to stay on the forefront of current technology, the Power Luncheon featuring technology strategist Crystal Washington is the premier event in the extensive education schedule coming to the Atlantic City Convention Center, June 12-14.

Research shows most U.S. consumers use some sort of social media. Powerful Google search functions, paired with sites like LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter, are making prospecting and relationship building easier. Expo East's Power Luncheon explores using technology for prospecting, gaining referrals and inbound marketing.

Washington brings her background in leveraging technology to increase profits and productivity to Expo East. She is the owner of CWM Enterprises, a social media instructional brand aimed at training everyone from Millennials to Baby Boomers to strategically use social media and apps for sales, marketing and general efficiency. She has collaborated with Google, Microsoft, GE and other companies in the U.S., as well as Europe and Africa, and has appeared in *The Huffington Post*, *Entrepreneur* magazine, *Glamour* magazine, *Bloomberg Business Week* and in stories by *The Associated Press*.

Washington is the author of *One Tech*

Action: A Quick-and-Easy Guide to Getting Started Using Productivity Apps and Websites for Busy Professionals, and *The Social Media Why: A Busy Professional's Practical Guide to Using Social Media Including LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Pinterest, Google+ and Blogs for Business*.

Expo East 2017 is bringing the high-quality, diverse education opportunities to the Atlantic City Convention Center that industry professionals have come to expect at PPAI's trade shows, conferences and events. With 30 sessions across seven tracks—Strategies & Solutions, Corporate Responsibility, Industry Essentials, Marketing & Advertising, Decorate, Sales & Service and Technology—Expo East attendees can pick the right classes to expand their professional playbook, explore new opportunities and move their careers ahead.

Power Luncheon: The Future of Social Media for Sales Professionals

Monday, June 12, 12-1:30 pm

Room 412, Level 4

MAS: 1 point

Session fees: \$40 (members), \$80 (nonmembers)

Tickets can be purchased with Expo East registration or added on to an existing registration. Learn more about Expo East at expoeast.ppai.org.

PPAI Rolls Out Inaugural SPARK Event For Young Professionals

This summer, PPAI is introducing the inaugural SPARK event for young professionals in the promotional products industry. To be held July 27-28 in Denver, Colorado, SPARK is the latest development in a series of "pop-ups" PPAI introduced last year that offer education and networking opportunities for young people working in the industry.

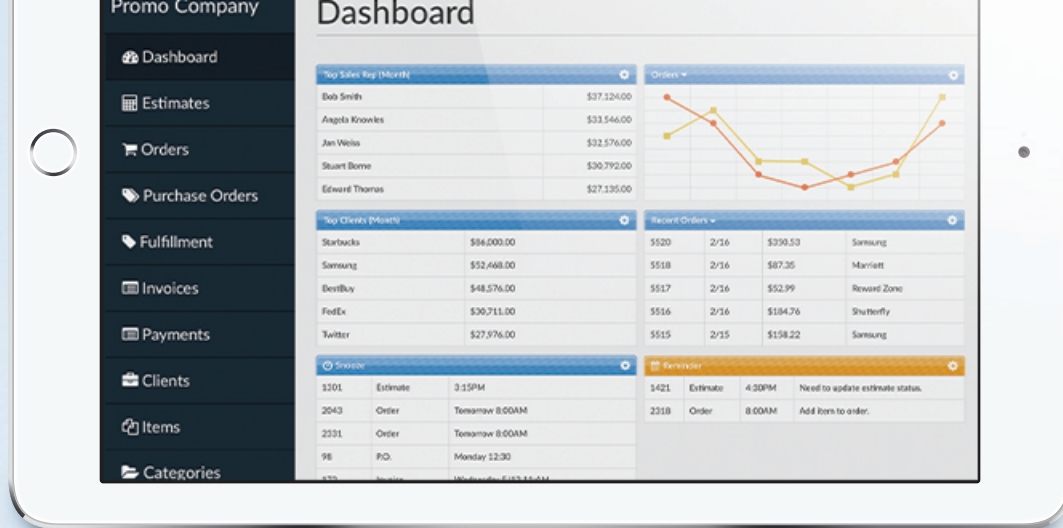
SPARK's agenda is built around connecting future leaders and giving them insight into the ideas, projects and achievements that will shape the industry going forward. Participants will have the opportunity to become engaged, educated and connected with topics that are specific to the beginning stages of starting a successful career in the promotional products industry.

Alongside networking and team-building opportunities, SPARK's schedule includes several insightful speakers. In the first of two general sessions, Mike Ligon, founder of concert promoter HomeVibe Presents, will deliver a behind-the-scenes look at leadership in a shifting industry. Later, Chris Sinclair, owner of St. Catharines, Ontario-based distributor Brand Blvd., will explore coaching and team building from a young professional's perspective.

SPARK also offers attendees the choice of two breakout sessions: Mary Ellen Harden, president of supplier Wall Street Greetings and owner of Mellen Designs, shares her perspectives as a young professional and small-business owner; and multi-line rep Mike Eaton brings his audience up-to-date on a number of industry topics, including Amazon and Alibaba, quality over quantity and increasing ROI.

More information on SPARK can be found at www.ppai.org/events/spark.

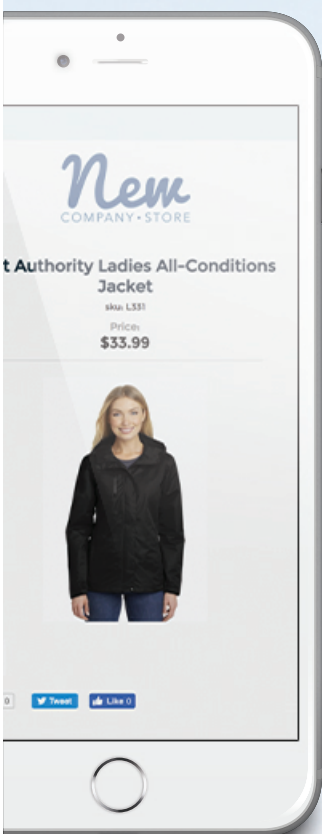




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PPAI Welcomes Jennifer Crowfoot As Director Of Professional Development

Jennifer Crowfoot has joined PPAI as the new director of professional development. Crowfoot brings a strong background in educational development, internal community building and conference management, which will be of considerable value to PPAI's professional development team.

PPB spoke with Crowfoot to learn more about this newest member of the Association's staff:

PPB What did you do before joining the Association?

Crowfoot Prior to joining PPAI, I was the global learning and development senior manager for Hitachi Consulting, where I was responsible for the development and deployment of global learning programs. I have over 19 years of training experience in a variety of industries focusing on facilitation, curriculum development, adult learning, communications and change management.

I earned both my bachelor's degree in speech communication and my master's degree in educational human development from Texas A&M University, and I am a certified facilitator in Fierce Conversations. I was the 2008 recipient of the Learning Leader of the Year Award at [on-demand e-learning and performance support solutions provider Skillsoft's] Perspectives and led my team to receive the Learning in Emerging Business Achievement Award in 2010. I have also participated as a speaker and panelist at a number of national learning and development conferences and events.

PPB What attracted you to your new position within the Association?

Crowfoot From my very first interaction with PPAI it was clear that everyone here

is passionate about serving members. As a learning and development professional, there is nothing more exciting or attractive than being part of an organization that has a focus on providing development opportunities to those they serve.

PPB What are your initial objectives for the position?

Crowfoot One of the first things I will be focusing on is the strategy and launch of our knowledge communities, the Promo Community Exchange. As part of PPAI's strategic goal to drive meaningful member engagement, the Promo Community Exchange will serve as a platform to allow our members to exchange ideas in targeted areas of the industry. I will also be working with the professional development team on our upcoming live conference events including Women's Leadership Conference, North American Leadership Conference and Tech Summit, and I am immersing myself in information to learn about the promotional products industry.

PPB Outside of PPAI, what are your interests?

Crowfoot Outside of work I keep busy with activities with my four children and my husband. I spend time with my daughter doing Girl Scouts, where I serve as a troop leader to an amazing group of 26 young ladies. I really enjoy taking them camping.

I also enjoy running. I run with an organization called Team in Training where we train for endurance sports and fundraise for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. In fact, I will be running my third marathon in May. My whole family has taken up running; we try to do a 5K as a family every few months or give back to the running community by working a water stop at a race.



Jennifer Crowfoot

“As a learning and development professional there is nothing more exciting or attractive than being part of an organization that has a focus on providing development opportunities to those they serve.”

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PPAI Names Sen. Gary Peters Its 2017 Legislator Of The Year

Sen. Gary Peters (D-MI) was presented with the Association's 2017 Legislator of the Year award in April during PPAI's Legislative Education and Action Day (L.E.A.D.) in Washington, D.C.

"We are pleased to recognize Sen. Peters, whose top priority is to support job creation and economic growth to strengthen small businesses," says Paul Bellantone, CAE, PPAI president and CEO. "His willingness to work with bipartisan groups to further small business, job creation, tax credit legislation and other issues important to our industry has been essential to the promotional products industry and protecting its interests."

The PPAI Legislator of the Year Award recognizes members of Congress who have shown a commitment to small-business interests and success, a willingness to meet with industry professionals and support of issues critical to the promotional products industry.



Sen. Gary Peters

Elected in 2014, Peters was recognized for his history of serving the needs of the promotional products industry by encouraging economic stability and growth through advocating for small business, promoting manufacturing and preserving

jobs. In his home state of Michigan, 98 percent of promotional products companies are small businesses employing approximately 7,812 and generating revenues of more than \$501.5 million.

The PPAI Legislator of the Year Award is presented as part of the annual L.E.A.D. event. This year, the eight annual L.E.A.D., nearly 80 advocates from 33 states conducted more than 250 meetings with senators, congressional representatives and their legislative staffs on Capitol Hill to discuss pending legislation and issues relevant to the promotional products industry.

Past recipients of the PPAI Legislator of the Year award are Rep. Tim Murphy (R-PA), 2012; Rep. Erik Paulsen (R-MN), 2013; Rep. Renee Ellmers (R-NC), 2014; Sen. Ron Johnson (R-WI), 2015; and Reps. Steven Chabot (R-OH) and Greg Walden (R-OR) in 2016.

PPAI Granted Get In Touch! Trademark Registration

PPAI has officially registered the Get In Touch!® mark with the United States Patent and Trademark Office (Reg. No. 5,156,031). The Association has used the Get In Touch! trademark and slogan, "Advertising that lives on," in multiple media outlets and throughout the industry for many months as part of its campaign designed to increase awareness and enhance the perception of the promotional products industry, and communicate the benefits of working with promotional consultants. The overall goal of the campaign is to direct a larger share of advertising dollars to the industry.

"We are very excited to announce that the U.S. Patent and Trademark

Office has approved the trademark registration of 'Get In Touch!,'" says Paul Bellantone, CAE, PPAI president and CEO. "Our success is based on our ability to competitively position the promotional products industry. It was very important for us to trademark this term so we can clearly distinguish one of the most unique characteristics of promotional products advertising, the ability to Get In Touch! with targeted audiences by putting brands in their hands like no other medium can."

More on the campaign and what it offers can be found at www.ppai.org/advocacy. **PPB**

GET IN!
TOUCH!
ADVERTISING THAT LIVES ON

PPAI President and CEO Paul Bellantone, CAE, moderated a panel discussion with local distributors Larry and Elizabeth Manshel, principals at ITC.4, sharing the industry's story with 300 students and faculty.



PPAI Educates Students On Industry Careers At AMA Collegiate Conference

PPAI is a long-standing partner and platinum-level sponsor of the American Marketing Association (AMA) and in March participated in its 39th annual International Collegiate Conference in New Orleans, Louisiana.



As it has in past years, PPAI sponsored the AMA conference's t-shirt design and trade-show exhibit competitions



PPAI Diversity Development and Engagement Manager Seth Barnett and Raining Rose, Inc. National Sales Representative Lindsey Whitney, MAS, share the promotional products industry's story with students at Johnson & Wales University.

PPAI Takes The Industry's Story To Students At Johnson & Wales University

On March 15, PPAI Diversity Development and Engagement Manager Seth Barnett joined Lindsey Whitney, MAS, national sales representative for supplier Raining Rose, Inc., to deliver a presentation to the Foundations of Marketing and Retail Marketing classes at Johnson & Wales University, Barnett and Whitney's alma mater.



After the presentation, Seth Barnett (left) spoke with several students, including Raynisha Washington, about careers in the promotional products industry.

BELLA+CANVAS, Gildan Join Charity To Help LA Homeless

Suppliers BELLA+CANVAS (PPAI 304892) and Gildan (PPAI 250187), in partnership with charity Bundles of Hope, distributed care packages to over 5,000 homeless people in Los Angeles on March 15. BELLA+CANVAS donated new t-shirts, and Gildan supplied pairs of socks to the care packages that Bundles of Hope will give to the homeless as they make their way back into traditional living. Bundles of Hope's mission is to provide homeless individuals in transition with basic essentials to help make their lives easier and to spread awareness of the challenges faced by people living on the streets of Los Angeles County.



Jack Harris, the son of BELLA+CANVAS CEO Danny Harris and a senior at Beverly Hills High School, founded Bundles of Hope and organized a group of students to assemble the packages.



During the panel discussion at the UMAPP Fire & Ice Show, PPAI President and CEO Paul Bellantone, CAE, shared the results of PPAI's surveys, research and interviews, as well as industry trends, and the conversation ranged from supplier and distributor best practices and regulatory and compliance issues, to consumer behavior and new technology.

Industry Leaders Join UMAPP Fire & Ice Show's Panel Discussion

The Upper Midwest Association of Promotional Professionals (UMAPP) held its 2017 Fire & Ice Show in March and brought together several industry leaders for a panel discussion on trends, research and best practices in the promotional products field. The panel, moderated by PPAI President and CEO Paul Bellantone, CAE, represented supplier, distributor and business services companies in the industry and featured Chuck Fandos, CEO of Brand Addition and FacilisGroup; CJ Schmidt, president of Hit Promotional Products; Paul Tauton, CEO of Business Impact Group; and Bill Smith, Jr., president of Brown & Bigelow and Hotline Calendars.

PPAI's Barnett Speaks At TRASA, CASA Shows

PPAI Diversity Development and Engagement Manager Seth Barnett joined the education programming at the Three Rivers Advertising Specialty Association (TRASA) and Caribbean Advertising Specialties Association's (CASA) shows in March to speak on Millennial consumerism and working to bring Millennial buyers into the promotional products industry.



Barnett's TRASA session drew an audience of nearly 40 attendees. He says, "This group was particularly engaged. Their market, the greater Pittsburgh area, holds a lot of appeal for young professionals and they're a growing presence in the area."



At the CASA Show, Barnett presented two sessions on Millennials and was joined onstage by a pair of local politicians advocating for Millennial understanding and workplace cooperation.



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PPAI 546970

American Sales & Solutions
PPAI 684061

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PPAI 705038

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PPAI 701094

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PPAI 679217

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Awards4u, Inc.
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Belle Mar Ink & Thread
PPAI 429565

Best Forms
PPAI 683235

Big Fish Printing
PPAI 519244

BizCard Xpress of Palm Coast
PPAI 705425

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PPAI 278188

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PPAI 288597

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Centralian Shop Unlimited, LLC
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PPAI 703493

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PPAI 508689

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PPAI 172688

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PPAI 703743

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PPAI 455160

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PPAI 704699

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PPAI 182621

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PPAI 703352

H & H Printwear
PPAI 695180

HALO
PPAI 704960

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PPAI 698139

HALO Branded Solutions
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PPAI 460788

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PPAI 400437

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PPAI 222868

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PPAI 485111

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PPAI 705119

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PPAI 281711

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PPAI 702041

Just Because Gifts
PPAI 267080

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Kelly Promotional Products
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Med Promos
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Meriwether Promotions
PPAI 682215

Minuteman Press
PPAI 705104

**Minuteman Press
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PPAI 513817

**MIRROR VISION
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PPAI 680502

Mollie B Creative
PPAI 695862

Moose Creek Printing
PPAI 703667

**MPC Louisville
Promotions, LLC**
PPAI 107765

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PPAI 695464

NJ Car Services, Inc.
PPAI 703416

Noveltymann Embroidery
PPAI 575084

Nu World Graphics
PPAI 390117

**Personalitees / The
Woolenwear Company**
PPAI 351815

**PRECISION SIGN
AND GRAPHICS**
PPAI 678059

Premium Graphics
PPAI 703454

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PPAI 704955

**PROforma Battlefield
Advertising**
PPAI 100242

Promotion D&L
PPAI 705121

Promotional Solutions, LLC
PPAI 429492

ProPlanit
PPAI 694909

Proven Print Services
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**Reach Promos
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**Rocky Mountain
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**Eric K.
Heitkamp**
Co-Owner
Lil' Respect, LLC
Southlake, Texas
PPAI 703444

How did your supplier company get its start? Lil' Respect, LLC, founded in 2016, was a culmination of several ideas and needs. The name was planted more than 30 years ago as a fun, family joke. My dad had all the material things he wanted in life. Every year, when asked what he wanted for his birthday or a special holiday, he would say in jest and without hesitation, "All I want is a little respect." In 2015, my wife, Stephanie, and I were trying to teach our two young boys unique and lifelong ways to respect and recognize the good in others. At the same time,

our six-year-old was coming to us wanting to write notes to his friends, teachers and the local firefighters about why he liked them. With these events, Lil' Respect, offering personalized, premium recognition gifts, was officially born.

What led your company to enter the promotional products market? Our mission is to provide individuals, businesses and organizations with a simple, unique and sincere way to express their gratitude, while also recognizing the positive qualities, abilities, contributions and achievements of others. We quickly recognized that Lil' Respect was the perfect gift for employee recognition, as it is a

fun, unique product with a serious message. PPAI gave us the best opportunity to get our product into the marketplace.

What's your favorite thing about being in the promotional products industry? As a new member, PPAI gives our company credibility in the marketplace. It also offers us the opportunity to take advantage of PPAI's unique resources and benefits. Also important, it gives us the opportunity to get our product in front of thousands of new potential customers.

Why did you join PPAI? As a manufacturer's rep in the packaging industry, I was very familiar with PPAI from the PPAI customers I had worked with over the years. Through my experience with them, and in addition to supporting them at PPAI-sponsored events, I knew this was the best opportunity for our organization.



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SAVE THE DATE

For The PPAI Expo 2018

JANUARY 2018

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					5	6
	1	2	3	4	12	13
7	8	9	10	11	19	20
14	15	16	17	18	26	27
21	22	23	24	25		
28	29	30	31			



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January 14-18, 2018 • Education January 14-15 • Exhibits January 16-18 • Mandalay Bay Convention Center • Las Vegas

the Creative Calendar

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3

National
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<17

World
Juggling
Day

27 >

PTSD
Awareness
Day



July

National Grilling Month

National Parks And
Recreation Month

National Watermelon Month

<11

World Population Day

6

Take Your
Webmaster
To Lunch Day

9-15

Sports Cliché Week



August

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Awareness Month

15-21 >

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Aviation Week

1- 7 >

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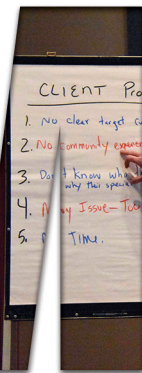
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World Lung
Cancer Day



If this calendar is helpful or if you have ideas for ways in which we can better provide this information, email the editors at PPB@ppai.org.

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